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ABSTRACT

Two or three selected rural regions in Western Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania were surveyed to find out what happens to school leavers in rural areas of Australia and how their perceived options and actual opportunities can be enhanced. The three-phase survey began with a questionnaire being administered to all Year 9-12 students in Western Australia and Queensland and all Year 9-10 students in Tasmania (n=3432). The second questionnaire, sent to 978 actual school leavers, yielded 762 responses and the final phase was comprised of approximately 30 interviews. Background information on the selected regions, i.e., economic, demographic, social, cultural, and educational characteristics, were compared and unusual features and differences between areas noted. Each state used its own data to write an individual report and these formed the basis of the national analysis and comparisons. Included in the 14 findings were that 6 months after leaving school, 23% of Western Australia leavers and 30% of Tasmanian and Queensland leavers were unemployed, with female school leavers being the majority of the unemployed. Numerous statistical tables (47) are dispersed throughout the document and a substantial appendix concludes the report. (AH)

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School Leavers in Country Areas

REX STOESSIGER

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF TASMANIA

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SCHOOL LEAVERS IN COUNTRY AREAS

A study of school leavers in selected rural areas of Western Australia, Queensland and Tasmania

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Rex Stoessiger

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Education Department
of Tasmania
Hobart 1980

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This study was supported by a grant from the Schools Commission.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The interstate advisory group formed to co-ordinate the study consisted of :

Mr. L.D. Blazely, Chairman (Tasmania)
Mr. P. Cameron, (Schools Commission)
Mr. P. Dunnell, (Western Australia)
Mr. T. Schramm, (Queensland)

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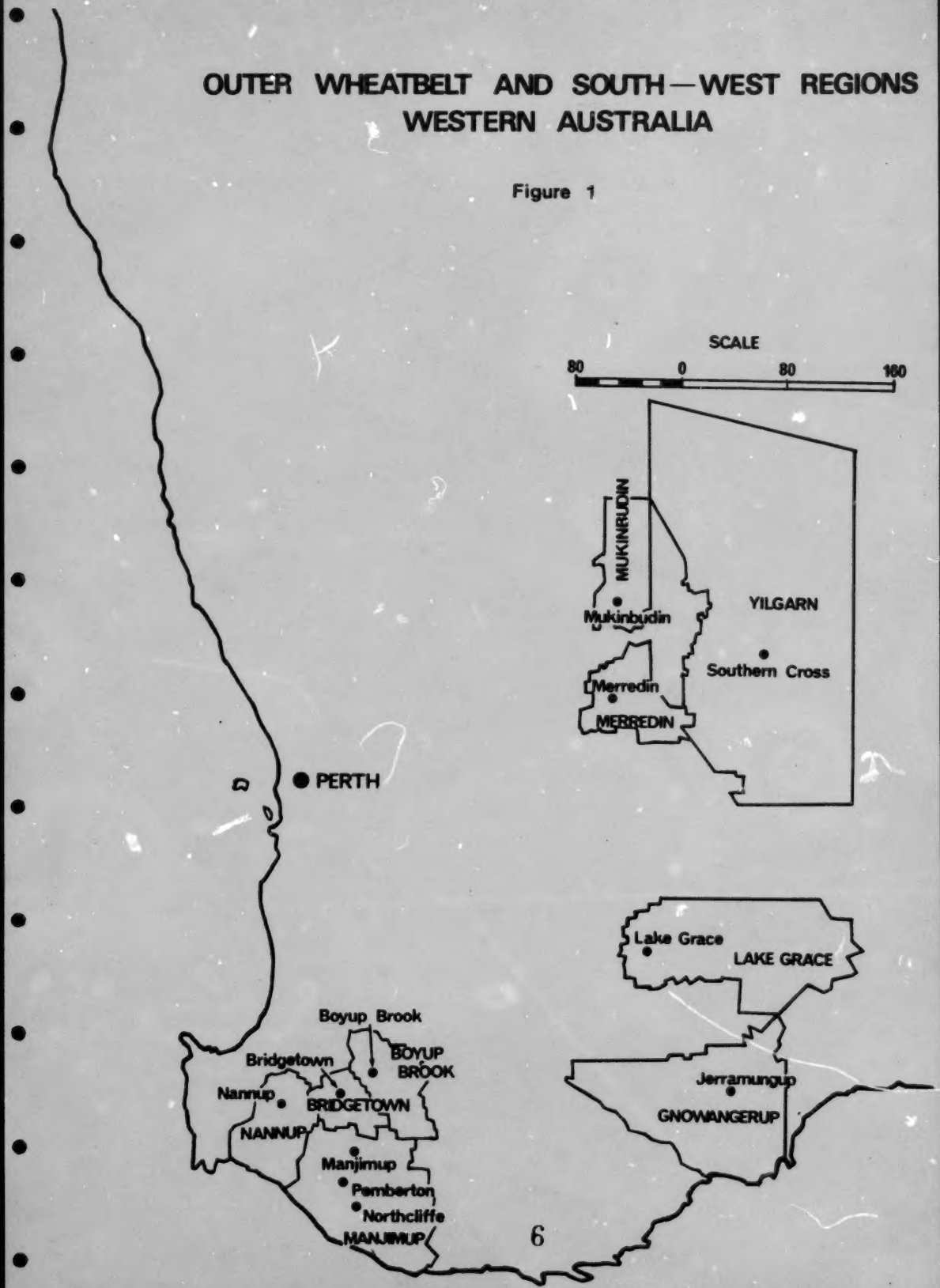
OUTER WHEATBELT AND SOUTH—WEST REGIONS WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Figure 1



PILBARA REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Figure 2

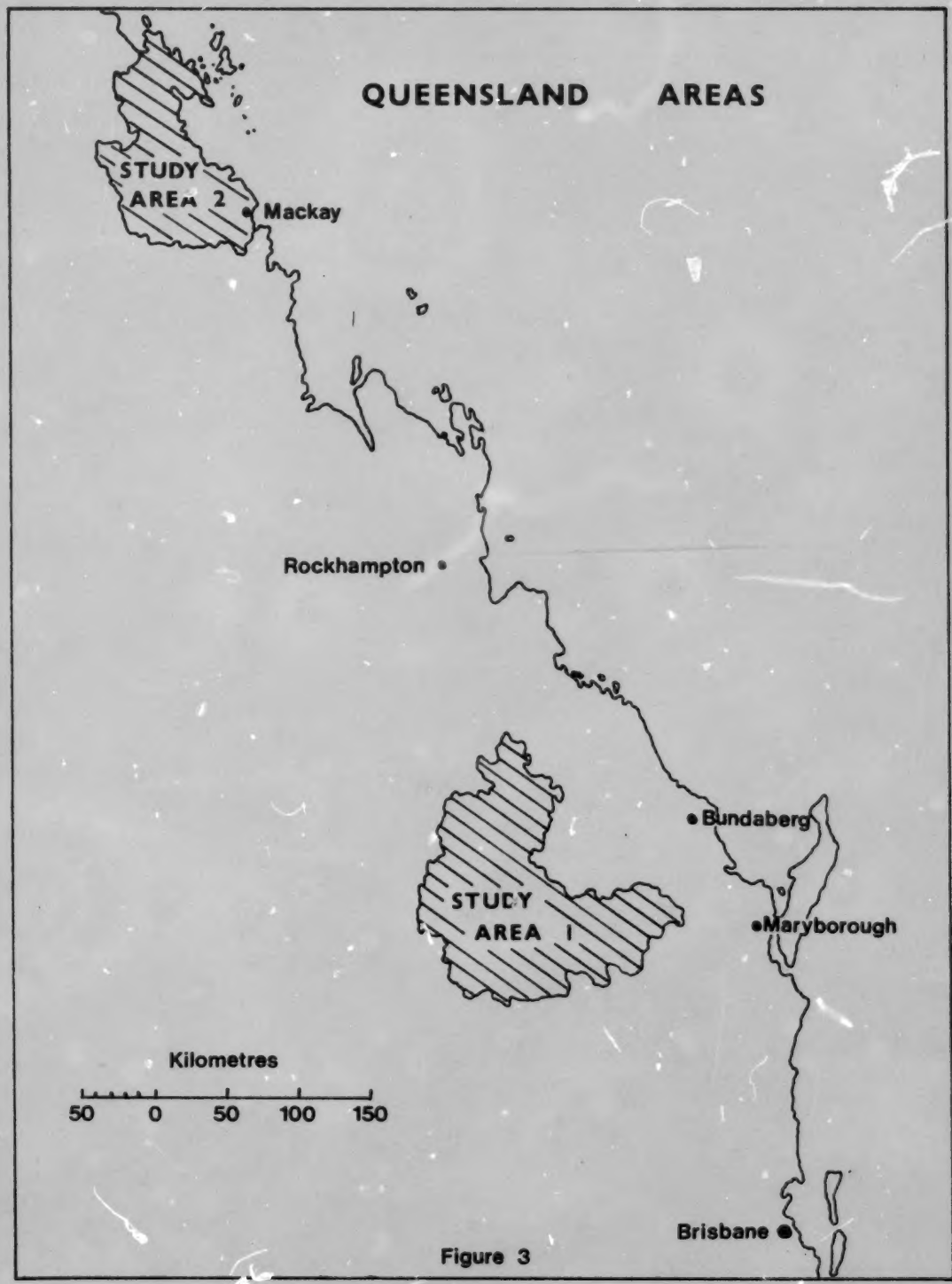

QUEENSLAND AREAS
STUDY AREA 2
Mackay
Rockhampton
Bundaberg
STUDY AREA 1
Maryborough
Kilometres
50 0 50 100 150
Brisbane

Figure 3

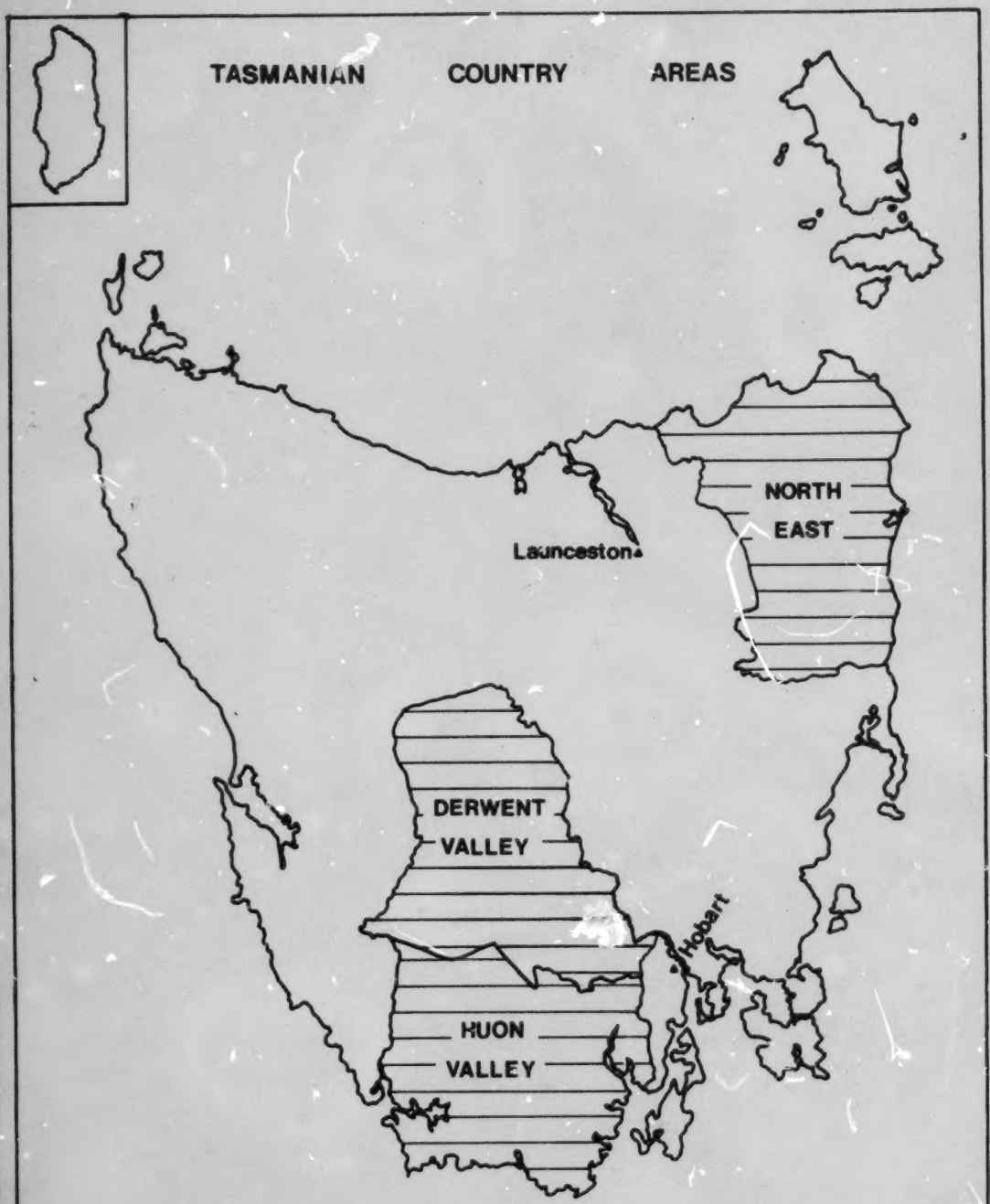

TASMANIAN COUNTRY AREAS
NORTH EAST
Launceston
DERWENT VALLEY
Hobart
HUON VALLEY

Figure 4

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The need for a study of what happens to school leavers in rural areas was recognised largely because of a concern about educational disadvantage in rural Australia.

The concept of educational disadvantage and its effects on certain groups in Australia was first given national exposure by the Interim Committee for the Schools Commission in its report 'Schools in Australia' published in May, 1973. Socio-economic disadvantage was the main focus of this part of the report which recommended that special funds be allocated to individual schools located in socially disadvantaged areas.[1] These schools were located in both urban and rural areas in all States but the Committee gave priority to the serious conditions in inner city areas especially in Australia's major metropolitan centres.[2]

The Interim Committee suggested that equality in the provision of educational resources "has become harder to maintain in country areas as the basic minimum of education has risen...".[3] It also commented that country students have lower levels of participation in schooling and higher education and considered some explanations.[4] Despite these comments none of the programmes recommended by the Interim Committee was specifically addressed to the needs of country areas or country students.

Since 1973 the problems of country schools and country students have begun to attract more attention from educators. The Disadvantaged Schools Program, with its focus on individual schools and on socio-economic aspects of disadvantage, was not well placed to deal with the broader needs of country education. In its Report for the Triennium 1976-1978, the Schools Commission acknowledged the need for broader action and suggested a wide ranging discussion of country education and proposed an extensive programme of activities designed to improve country education.[5] Although the Commonwealth Government did not act on the Schools Commission 1976-78 recommendations in respect of research and action in country schools, the Schools Commission, in its 1976 Report, again proposed a similar (though scaled down) programme to commence, on a pilot basis, in all states in 1977.[6] This recommendation was accepted and became the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program, to which $3.5 million was allocated by the Commonwealth for the 1977 calendar year. The existence of this programme, and its creation in all states of working parties responsible for implementing research and other activities to address the educational needs of certain country areas, proved a continuing stimulus for education authorities and tertiary institutions to focus their attention on educational provision and performance in country areas.

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1. Australia. Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission Schools in Australia. Chairman, Peter H. Karmel. (AGPS, Canberra 1973) ch. 9.
2. ibid, para. 9, 34 p. 102.
3. ibid, para. 3, 3 p. 16.
4. ibid, para. 3, 13 p.19.
5. Australian Schools Commission, Report for the Triennium 1976-78 (AGPS, Canberra, 1975). Ch. 6 pp. 73-81.
6. Australia. Schools Commission, Report: Rolling Triennium 1977-1979 (AGPS, Canberra, 1976). paras 7. 6-7. 13, pp. 65-67.

At the same time research activities undertaken by the Research Branch of the Education Department of Tasmania provided evidence of the nature and level of educational disadvantage and suggested the need for more investigations. The first of these was the Schooling and Work investigations of twenty-three year olds in Tasmanian urban and rural communities,[7] which was commissioned by the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty and was undertaken during 1974 and 1975. It demonstrated considerable rural disadvantage in both schooling and access to vocational opportunities.[8] This was followed by the Huon Vailey Study,[9] a descriptive investigation of education and the experiences of school leavers in the Huon Valley area of southern Tasmania in 1977. The study confirmed the educational disadvantage and limited access to employment opportunities of these rural students. However, it could find no evidence of a lack of resource provision in the region with the exception of the absence of post Year 10 educational provision.[10] As a result of its research activity the Tasmanian Education Department asked the Schools Commission to fund a national conference on rural education. The conference took place in Launceston from 17th to 19th June, 1977 and brought together approximately twenty people with specialist knowledge of country education.[11] These people represented education authorities in all states, the Schools Commission, tertiary institutions and parent bodies. The major purpose of the conference was to determine areas of investigation which would provide information that would help to shape future policies and suggest ways of overcoming educational disadvantage in rural areas. The conference recognised that the problems associated with establishing policies relating to country education stemmed from a diversity in the prevailing conditions in the various regions and from a lack of documented evidence of the provision of services, the problems of children in isolated areas and the changing patterns of rural life and job opportunity in Australia.[12] The main proposal of the conference was that the Schools Commission initiate a co-ordinated programme of research into country education and undertake the preparation of a report and other publications supporting present and proposed initiatives in country education.

Several types of study were identified as necessary including a proposal that all states and territories select a number of country areas of different sizes and functions for studies of the characteristics of those rural areas. It was proposed to investigate the nature of the education provision and outcomes including participation in schooling, leaving school for employment, the children leaving schools in those areas to seek education elsewhere and the attitudes of parents to the nature of the education provided.

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7. Neville Behrens, Schooling and Work. (Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart, 1975).
8. Neville Behrens, Schooling and Work. (Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart, 1975), pp. 197-198.
9. N. Behrens et al., The Huon Valley Study. (Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart, 1978).
10. Ibid, pp. 144-145.
11. Education Department of Tasmania, A Program for Research into Country Education in Australia. (Hobart, 1977), p.3.
12. Ibid, p.6.

The report of this conference was considered by the Schools Commission which decided that a small study group of five or six research officers should meet with a Commissioner and members of the Commission secretariat to examine the data collection proposals of the conference and to advise the Commission of their feasibility and the method and cost of implementing them. Consequently, the Directors-General in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania were asked to nominate a research and/or planning officer to attend a planning meeting which took place in Adelaide in September, 1977. In examining the recommendations of the Launceston conference, the study group agreed that, because the patterns of rural life in many areas of Australia had already undergone fundamental and rapid change in recent years and that, because the immediate future promised further rationalisation of rural industries and more disruption to the lives of communities and individuals, any research should be within the context of the need for urgent action. It was therefore suggested that a national programme of research should directly benefit the existing Disadvantaged Country Areas Program so as to immediately aid its evaluation and future planning. It was also agreed that the most urgent research task was for a short-term follow-up study of school leavers because such a study would examine the social outcomes relevant to schooling and provide information about many commonly held assumptions about rural education.13

The intention of the study group was that the follow-up study of country school leavers should commence before the end of the 1977 school year. However, the meeting occurred relatively late in the year and it was not possible to prepare the study proposal in sufficient detail to obtain the agreement of the states to participate in the project.

The notion of undertaking a national research study of the post-school experiences of students leaving a sample of rural schools was revived in 1978. In June of that year a meeting took place in Canberra to plan the study in detail so that the education authorities in the states and territories could be asked to participate. Again, this planning meeting was attended by research or planning officers from state and territory education authorities and the details of the study, as described in the following chapter, were determined. The study was then commenced with questionnaire contact of all the potential school leavers in the selected areas during November, 1978 and continued over a 12 month period leading to a final report in 1980.

For a variety of reasons, such as their having recently completed similar research or their not having staff available to undertake the project, several Education Departments did not join the project. Eventually Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia agreed to undertake the study.

The three states already had undertaken considerable research in rural education. The work in Tasmania was noted above, while Queensland had undertaken a major study of educational and vocational opportunities in country areas under the

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13. Schools Commission, Report of a Consultative Group which met to consider the feasibility of proposals made at the Launceston Conference on Country Education. (September 1977) p.2.

auspices of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty.[14]

Western Australia had become involved during 1976 in an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) study of basic education provision in sparsely populated areas.[15] In all three cases their previous involvement in research related to education in rural areas stimulated the Education Departments concerned to participate in the study.

1.2 Related Research Studies

Throughout the time that the study was being developed, there was a general increase in concern among teachers about the problems of providing education in country areas and of the situations being faced by adolescents when they left school. Consequently, there were a number of other research studies initiated into these problems, some of which are still operating. Few of these studies focussed exclusively on the situations of country school leavers, but many included rural schools, rural students and rural school leavers in their samples. Some of the major studies of this type which were initiated either before or about the same time as the Country School Leavers' Study were the following:

1. Research co-ordinated by Professor D. Beswick of Melbourne University into the relative influence of home environment on schooling in the academic achievement and careers of youth. This study was funded by the Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC) and undertaken for the Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training.[16]

2. Research again funded by ERDC, undertaken by Associate Professor M. Poole of Macquarie University, based upon earlier research at Latrobe University on 15-18 year age groups. Professor Poole attempted to draw together a series of studies on the views of adolescents on a wide range of topics including factors influencing career choice, role of the school, sex differences in curricula, age on leaving school and career choice, leisure and early school leavers.[17]

3. A research study co-ordinated by Dr. T.H. Williams, Associate Director of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), involving a four year

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14. B. McGaw, R.S. Warry, P.J. Varley and J. Alcorn, Prospects for School Leavers. In Australia. Commission of Inquiry into Poverty, School Leavers: Choice and Opportunity. (Poverty and Education Series). AGPS, Canberra, 1977. pp. 35-115.
15. Education Department of Western Australia, Educational Provision in Sparsely Populated Areas of Western Australia. (Studies in Rural Education No. 1). Education Department of Western Australia, West Perth, 1979.
16. Office of Youth Affairs, School to Work Transition: Activities of Commonwealth Departments. (Canberra, 1979), p.4.
17. Office of Youth Affairs, School to Work Transition: Activities of Commonwealth Departments. (Canberra, 1979), p.4.

longitudinal study of school leavers from among 10 and 14 year old students surveyed in 1975 as a part of the ACER literacy and numeracy study, "Australian Studies in School Performance".[18]

4. A research study being undertaken at Flinders University by E.A. Cleland, A.J. Goldsworthy and R.J. Stimson focussing on the aspirations of school leavers in rural areas of South Australia. Initially, this study focussed on the locational preferences and job expectations of students in selected rural areas of South Australia.[19]

5. A research study conducted by the South Australian Education Department into the occupational aspirations and post-school experiences of a sample of school leavers in South Australia.[20]

Apart from these major research projects there were a number of other investigations and reviews being undertaken by Commonwealth and State departments and authorities. The Office of Youth Affairs had a number of reviews of the social impact of unemployment on youth and the wider community and of the effectiveness of present support services for school leavers. Most Education Departments were involved in some research or review activity focussing on the problems faced by students in making the transition from school to work. It is in this context of growing concern about rural education and the problems of school to work transition that the Country School Leavers' Study was developed and undertaken and it is in this context of many related research activities that this report and its recommendations should be considered.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The planning meeting in Canberra in June, 1978, which established the detail of the study, agreed that its aim would be to address the following question. "What happens to school leavers in rural areas of Australia and how can their perceived options and actual opportunities be enhanced?".

Within the question the following terms were defined:

School leavers - all students enrolled in Years 9 to 12 who terminate their enrolment in nominated schools during a nominated period. The nominated period was from the end of third term 1978 until the end of first term, 1979.

Rural areas - any designated area of a State which does not contain a town with a population of over 20,000.

Options - the range of occupational choices perceived to be available by the students.

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18. T.H. Williams et. al., A Survey of School Leavers. Progress Report for 1978. (ACER, Victoria, 1978).
19. E.R. Cawthorn et. al., The Country School and School Leaver. (Roseworthy, S.A. 1980).
20. J. Delin, J. Saunders and Q. Inshaw, School Leavers Project. (Education Department of S.A., Adelaide, 1979).

Opportunities - the range of occupational choices actually available as determined by the study.

The study was intended to be partly descriptive in that the actual experiences of the school leavers would be described. However, perhaps more importantly, the study was also seen as being policy- and action-oriented in that it would draw conclusions and make recommendations about how the options and opportunities available to country school leavers could be increased.

2. METHODOLOGY

The design of the study was principally determined at the planning meeting which took place in Canberra in June, 1978. It was agreed to focus on two or three regions in each state, attempt to survey all potential school leavers and then follow-up the actual leavers a few months later.

2.1 Study Regions

It was agreed that each State would select two or three country regions for inclusion in this study. The following criteria were to apply in the selection:

a) The areas selected should each have a minimum population of approximately 8 000 but none should include a population centre in excess of 20 000.

b) The areas should have varying degress of isolation from major population centres.

c) At least one of the areas should be included in the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program (in Western Australia this is now called the Priority Country Schools Program). This was so that a nominated 'disadvantaged' rural area would be included and the effects of any activities for school leavers sponsored by the Program could be assessed.

d) The areas should have different economic bases and different histories in terms of the employment opportunities they offered.

e) The school enrolments in each area should provide between 150 and 400 in each school grade applicable to this study.

The regions chosen were compared across all three states to ensure sufficient diversity existed between those chosen by each state. The regions are described in the next chapter.

2.2 Information Collection

Information was collected in four distinct stages.

a) Background description of the selected regions. The areas included in the study were described in terms of their historical, economic, demographic, social and cultural characteristics and the nature of their educational provision. These descriptions focussed on the employment, social and cultural opportunities available in the region and the types of education provision made. A list of what information would be collected was drawn up. It was used to provide a common core of data across the three states but each state was free to collect whatever additional data they considered necessary. The core information to be collected is shown in Appendix 1.

b) Initial Questionnaire.

The data collection from students included in this study commenced with a questionnaire administered early in November, 1978 to all students in Years 9 to 12 in all the schools in the study regions. As Tasmanian schools in rural areas do not continue beyond Year 10, Year 11 and 12 students were not surveyed in that state. The questionnaire sought three types of information from the students; personal details (such as name, age, sex, place of living and numbers of siblings), educational details (such as grade and number of schools attended) and personal aspirations and expectations (such as types of occupations sought, likely chances of personal success and willingness to leave the study area). A copy of the questionnaire which was developed and trialled in Tasmania and used in all three states, is provided in Appendix 2.

In some states arrangements were made with the schools concerned for members of the study team to administer the questionnaire during normal class periods. In others the questionnaires were administered by classroom teachers guided by written instructions from the study team.

c) A second questionnaire was sent to actual school leavers between April and May, 1979.

A preliminary list of leavers was obtained by contacting schools early in 1979. In Queensland, questionnaires were sent to all those on this list. In Tasmania and Western Australia, schools gave the names of any leavers believed to be continuing their education at some other school, college, etc. The appropriate institutions were then contacted to confirm if particular students were still enrolled in full-time education. Only those believed to have left full-time education were sent questionnaires, mailed to the home addresses given by the students or (in Western Australia) to a forwarding address provided by the school. Where the questionnaire responses indicated that the respondent was still in full-time education they were eliminated from the study.

The questionnaire, a copy of which is attached as Appendix 3, was developed and tested in Tasmania, but used by all three states. It was designed to provide information on why students had left school, their employment situations, the job search and their attitudes to work and unemployment.

In Tasmania and Western Australia, school achievement data was also collected for the four core subjects - English, Science, Social Studies and Mathematics. The data was taken from Achievement Certificate results for Year 9 and 10 leavers in Western Australia and School Certificate results from Year 10 leavers in Tasmania.

d) Interview Studies.

The final stage was to interview sub-samples of those replying to the second questionnaire. Interviews were designed to collect first hand information on what it is like to leave school in rural areas and on the attitudes of leavers to employment, unemployment, their preparation for post-school life and related matters.

Interviews were conducted in August, 1979 with the various States selecting samples in the following categories:

i) the unemployed - all three States;

ii) females whose school potential appeared greater than their employment status - Tasmania;

iii) those in stable employment - Queensland, Western Australia;

iv) those planning to leave school in 1978 who actually returned in 1979 - Queensland and Western Australia. Each State conducted about 30 interviews in total.

In Queensland and Tasmania only leavers or students were interviewed. In Western Australia 12 leavers or students were interviewed, supplemented with interviews of at least one parent and one teacher.

2.3 Response Rates

The number of students responding to the questionnaires is given in Table 1.

Table 1. Numbers responding to the questionnaires

	W.A.	Qld.	Tas.	Total
1st questionnaire	1371	1043	1018	3432
2nd questionnaire	256	358	364	978
2nd questionnaire as a % of those sent	69%	84%	85%	80%
Number of actual leavers completing questionnaires	194	230	302	726

The response to the first questionnaire represented virtually all the Years 9 to 12 students present at school when it was administered. For the second questionnaire, the different approaches of the three States described above resulted in an overall response rate of 80%. Many of the respondents were still in full-time education, but 726 usable questionnaires were obtained from actual school leavers.

2.4 Analysis

The background information on the selected regions was compared and unusual features and differences between the areas are discussed in Chapter 3.

The interview data was examined and the major themes noted.

The questionnaire data was encoded and processed individually by each state. The themes arising from the interviews were used to further analyse the questionnaire data. Each state cross-tabulated the data by a range of variables, including sex, employment status etc. and noted significant differences.

Finally the data from all three states was brought together and analysed on a national basis.

Unless otherwise indicated in the text, differences were regarded as significant at the 1% level.

2.5 Reports

Each state used their own data to write an individual report and these formed the basis for the national report.

3. THE STUDY AREAS

In this section the study regions in the different states will be compared on social and educational indicators. Only a brief outline of each individual study region will be given as full descriptions are available from the state reports.

The data used is based on that provided by the states as described in Section 2.2.

3.1 Western Australian Regions

The three regions chosen in this state were called 'South West', 'Outer Wheatbelt' and 'Pilbara'. (Figures 1 and 2).

The Outer Wheatbelt is the area of this name in the Priority Country Schools Program based on the small towns of Mukinbudin, Southern Cross, Lake Grace and Terramungup with the addition of Merredin. The region is 260 kms east of Perth at its closest, and 560 kms south-east of Perth at its furthest point. It is principally a wheat farming area.

The South West is a region based on the town of Manjimup and extending 60 kilometres around it. It is 300 kilometres south of Perth. It is a timber, fruit growing and pastoral region.

The Pilbara is taken as the three settlements of Newman, Tom Price and Paraburdoo, 1,500 kilometres north of Perth. These towns were established to service the mining of iron ore.

3.2 Queensland Regions

The two regions studies in Queensland were the Burnett and Mackay regions. (Figure 3).

The Burnett River enters the sea near the town of Bundaberg, 368 kilometres north of Brisbane. The river system drains a large, inland area known as the Burnett Region. It is centred on the towns of Monto, Eidsvold, Mundubbera, Gayndah and Biggenden. It is an area of primary production based on beef, dairying and fruit and peanut growing.

The Mackay region is located on the central Queensland "sugar coast", and is the immediate rural hinterland of Mackay. It is closely linked to Mackay, although Proserpine is the major centre actually in the study area. Cane growing and sugar production are the mainstays of the region's economy. Tourism is important in the northern part of the area which includes the Whitsunday group of islands.

3.3 Tasmanian Regions

The three Tasmanian study regions are the Huon Valley, the Derwent Valley and the North-East. (Figure 4).

The Huon Valley is the region centred on the lower basin of the Huon River, 35 kilometres south of Hobart but clearly separated from it by an intervening zone of hills. It has traditionally been renowned for apple and pear production but this industry has been in decline over the last ten years.

The Derwent Valley extends northwards from New Norfolk, the major centre, and 37 kilometres from Hobart, along the Derwent River and its tributaries. Newsprint production and the associated forestry operations are the major economic activities in the area. Rural industries are also important, ranging from hop growing on the valley floors to wool production on higher areas.

The North-East takes in the whole north-east corner of Tasmania, starting 80 kms east of Launceston. It includes several distinct physical areas; rolling farm lands in the north, a narrow coastal plain and the Fingal Valley in the south, with a mountainous region in the centre. The region supports a variety of farming activities ranging from intensive vegetable production to extensive merino sheep areas. Coal mining is an important activity in the Fingal Valley.

3.4 Social Indicators

The populations of all but two of the eight regions declined between the 1966 and 1976 censuses (1971 and 1976 in Western Australia), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Population Changes (data provided by each State)

Region	1966 Population	1976 Population	% Change
Burnett	13,341	11,200	-16.0
Mackay	18,358	20,297	+10.6
North-East	11,676	10,543	-9.7
Huon	11,554	9,859	-14.7
Derwent Valley	14,644	13,594	-7.2
	1971 Population	1976 Population	% Change
Outer Wheatbelt	13,753	13,458	-2.1
South-West	14,940	13,944	-6.6
Pilbara	15,576	15,674	+0.6

The declining populations contrast with an overall population growth in all three States. There was a small growth in the Pilbara associated with the mining industry and a significant population growth in the Mackay area. Growth in this area has resulted from the developing tourist industry and commercial development orientated towards urban Mackay rather than from any growth in rural activities.

The population change in the two areas with the greatest declines (Burnett and Huon) results directly from the collapse of particular agricultural industries (dairying and apple production respectively).

The major male occupation groupings are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Some Important Male Occupations (percentages)

	Professional	Farming	Mining	Production Work	Total Employed (100%)
Outer Wheatbelt	4.1	48.9	n.s*	20.6	4,572
South-West	5.3	28.7	n.s	38.0	4,308
Pilbara	6.8	n.s	18.3	38.8	4,300
Burnett	4.3	44.2	n.s	24.5	3,184
Mackay	4.3	42.2	n.s	27.8	6,235
North-East	5.4	23.1	6.3	31.3	2,840
Huon	5.4	26.8	n.s	35.6	2,434
Derwent Valley	7.9	11.8	n.s	53.3	3,757

* n.s - not a significant occupation in this area.

The two areas where farming is a relatively minor activity are the Pilbara and the Derwent Valley, being mining and paper-producing centres respectively. These regions also have the greatest percentages of professionals. The Tasmanian regions have a smaller percentage of people employed in farming than the agricultural regions in the other States, while the Queensland regions, along with the Outer Wheatbelt in Western Australia have small proportions of production and process workers.

In terms of family incomes, given in Table 4, three regions are markedly more affluent than the others.

Table 4. Family Income

	Families in Private Dwellings	Family Income $7,000 or less		Family Income over $18,000	
		No.	%	No.	%
Outer Wheatbelt	3932	1172	29.8	528	13.5
South-West	4232	1070	25.3	98	2.3
Pilbara	1576	136	8.6	256	16.2
Burnett	3338	1912	57.3	86	2.5
Mackay	5100	1408	27.6	910	17.8
North-East	3416	1826	53.4	96	2.8
Huon	3002	1576	52.4	68	2.3
Derwent Valley	3568	1134	31.8	152	4.3

These are the Mackay, Pilbara and Outer Wheatbelt areas. With the exception of the Outer Wheatbelt, the regions in the Schools Commissions Disadvantaged Country Areas Program (the Huon and Burnett Regions) are the least affluent regions. However, North-East Tasmania is similar to these two.

The more affluent areas also have lower numbers of males receiving pensions and unemployment benefits, see Table 5, although the South-West also has quite low numbers. The three Tasmanian areas are the most disadvantaged with the Huon having nearly twice the unemployment rate of any other area.

Table 5. Males Receiving Pensions and Unemployment Benefits

	Receiving Pensions		Receiving Unemployment Benefits		Total (100%)
	No.	%	No.	%	
Outer Wheatbelt	486	6.7	50	0.7	7,400
South-West	790	10.8	34	0.5	7,300
Pilbara	150	2.5	15	0.2	6,100
Burnett	731	12.8	85	1.5	5,716
Mackay	1,079	10.0	46	0.4	10,777
North-East	991	18.4	104	1.9	5,376
Huon	835	16.5	180	3.6	5,055
Derwent Valley	1,016	14.1	113	1.6	7,191

The numbers receiving only a low level of schooling are given in Table 6. Although there are significant differences within each State, the percentages leaving at 14 or less are smallest in Western Australia and highest in Queensland, with the Tasmanian regions in between.

Table 6. Those who left school at 14 or less

	No. left school at 14 or less	% of those left school
Outer Wheatbelt	2,788	24.8
South-West	3,496	32.8
Pilbara	807	18.8
Burnett	3,331	47.3
Mackay	5,134	41.9
North-East	2,780	41.0
Huon	2,216	37.5
Derwent Valley	2,663	33.1

3.5 Educational Provision

There are some important differences between the structures of the school systems in the three States.

Primary schools continue to Year 6 in Tasmania, Year 7 in Queensland and Year 8 in Western Australia. Beyond these levels, secondary education is available at high schools (secondary only) or secondary/primary schools. These latter are called district high schools in Western Australia and Tasmania, and secondary departments (attached to primary schools) in Queensland.

Primary/secondary schools provide schooling to the Year 10 level in the three States. High schools in Queensland and senior high schools in Western Australia continue to Year 12 level. However in Tasmania, high schools finish at Year 10, with Years 11 and 12 available at community colleges. These are only located in major centres, students from the Tasmanian rural areas needing to move, or travel, to the city to proceed beyond Year 10.

All three States award certificates at the Year 10 and Year 12 levels, the latter certificate being the normal requirement for university entrance.

All of the areas have at least one secondary school, several primary/secondary schools (except for the Mackay region which has only one), and a larger number of primary schools.

There is no evidence that the schools in the study areas have less staff numbers than the norm. In Tasmania the student/teacher ratios are close to the State average, while in Queensland they are well below the average (see individual State reports). The ratios in the Western Australian regions are also below the State average.[21]

However, there is considerable variation in the numbers of beginning teachers (see Table 7) and the numbers of teachers with less than two and more than five years' experience (see Table 8).

Table 7. Number of Beginning Teachers

Region	Total Staff	Beginning Teachers	
		No.	%
Outer Wheatbelt	99	11	11.1
South-West	115	7	6.1
Pilbara	82	16	19.5
Burnett	70	15	21.4
Mackay	83	13	15.7
North-East	70	11	15.7
Huon	74	9	12.2
Derwent Valley	79	9	11.4

21. P. Dunnell, personal communication.

Table 8. Teacher Experience

	Teachers < 2 years		Teachers > 5 years	
	No.	%	No.	%
Outer Wheatbelt	74	74.7	9	9.1
South-West	59	51.3	12	10.4
Pilbara	65	79.3	2	2.4
Burnett	17	24.2	5	7.1
Mackay	14	16.9	12	14.5
North-East	2[illegible]	40.0	18	25.7
Huon	39	52.7	23	31.1
Derwent Valley	39	49.4	15	19.0

The two areas with the greatest numbers of beginning teachers are the Pilbara and Burnett regions. However, only the former has a high percentage of teachers who have less than two years' experience in their present school. With only two teachers having more than five years' experience in their present school, the Pilbara is by far the most disadvantaged region in terms of having a stable teaching staff. The Outer Wheatbelt area is next most disadvantaged in this regard but has only an average number of beginning teachers.

The three Tasmanian regions have, by far, the most staff with 5 years' experience in their present school, with nearly a third of the Huon teachers in this category. As noted in the Tasmanian report, the Tasmanian figures in Tables 7 and 8 are typical of both urban and rural areas.

4. TRANSITION : LEAVING SCHOOL

While keeping the overall perspective of transition as the process of moving from school to work, this chapter will concentrate on the aspects concerned with leaving school. In particular, the proportion of students leaving, why the students left, and their preparation for post-school life will be discussed.

4.1 Numbers Leaving School

Although slightly different methods were used by the three States in identifying school leavers (see Section 2.2.(c)), a fairly accurate picture of the numbers involved was obtained. Firstly, Table 9 shows how many of the November questionnaire respondents actually left the education system and entered the workforce. For the purposes of the investigation, only those who had left full-time study were regarded as "school leavers".

Table 9. Numbers leaving education

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Returned to full-time study	1062	77.5	746	71.6	629	61.8
Entered work-force	194	14.2	230	22.0	309	30.4
Unknown	115	8.4	67	6.4	80	7.8
TOTAL	1371	100.0	1043	100.0	1018	100.0

There are large statistically significant differences between the three States. In particular, the number entering the workforce in Tasmania is much larger than in the other two States. This is despite the absence of Year 11 and 12 students from the Tasmanian sample who make up a larger proportion of leavers in the other two States. The differences between the three States are illustrated most dramatically by the responses given by Year 9 and 10 students when asked in the November questionnaire when they planned to leave school. As Table 10 shows, twice as many Tasmanian students planned to leave in Year 10 as in Queensland, and three times as many as in Western Australia.

Table 10. When do you think you will leave school? (Year 9 and 10 students only)

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Not sure	229	21.4	134	16.9	60	5.9
At leaving age	24	2.2	11	1.4	10	1.0
On finding job	58	5.4	86	10.9	30	2.9
End of Gr. 9	13	1.2	10	1.3	22	2.2
End of Gr.10	244	22.8	272	34.3	710	69.7
End of Gr.11	125	11.7	12	1.6	24	2.4
End of Gr.12	373	34.9	263	33.2	158	15.5
No response	2	0.2	4	0.5	2	0.2
Not applicable	2	0.2	-	-	2	0.2
TOTAL	1070	100.0	792	100.0	1018	100.0

Finally, Table 11 gives Year 10 to Year 11 retention rates from the study and in each State.

Table 11. Proportions of Year 10 students in the study continuing to Year 11 and in the whole States (Government Schools, 1978).

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	Study areas	Whole State	Study areas	Whole State	Study areas	Whole State
% retention	46	54	44	44	20	35

The Tasmanian rural areas have less than half of the Year 11 retention of the rural areas in Queensland and Western Australia, whereas the differences on a whole State basis are nowhere near so large. Clearly there is something unusual about the rural areas of Tasmania.

These large and significant differences require explanation. In the previous chapter, some data on the nature and provision of education in rural areas were given. The only deficiency in education provision in Tasmanian rural areas is the lack of Year 11 and 12 schooling. In all other aspects, schooling in Tasmania seems to be as well provided for as the other States. The Tasmanian rural areas do not have relatively large numbers of adults with a limited education, as shown in Table 6.

However, the Tasmanian areas do have greater proportions on pensions and unemployment benefits and are less affluent, as measured by family incomes (Table 4). But on these criteria, the Tasmanian regions are not very different from the Burnett region in Queensland which has much the same retention rate to Year 11 as the other, more affluent, Queensland region. Hence, low economic status does not seem able to explain the low Year 11 retention rates in the Tasmanian areas.

The Tasmanian State Report[22] discussed the possibility of the low retention rates arising from poorer academic performance but this explanation was dismissed.

The most convincing explanation is that the termination of Tasmanian country schools at Year 10 and the necessity to move (or travel) to the city for Year 11 studies discourages a significant proportion of the Tasmanian students from continuing with their education. This explanation is also in accord with the interview data which revealed a considerable number of Tasmanian students who had discontinued their education for reasons associated with a lack of access to Year 11 studies.

The differences between Western Australia and Queensland in Tables 9 and 10 appear to arise from the larger numbers continuing to Year 11 in the former State and then leaving school. This is possibly due to the wider range of Year 11 courses, particularly alternative and terminal courses available. In 1978, 20% of Year 11 students were in terminal courses in Western Australia.

4.2 The Decision to leave School

Students seem to make a decision to leave school, based on their plans for the future and their attitude towards schooling.

While at school, students were asked what they planned to do when they left. The responses of Year 9 and 10 students are given in Table 12.

About 40% of the students in all three States hoped to get an apprenticeship or some other form of job training. But there were significant differences in other plans. More Western Australian students planned to go on to tertiary education than in the other States, whereas Tasmanian students were much more likely to want a job as soon as possible.

Leavers were asked to indicate whether any of the reasons for leaving education, listed in Table 13, applied to them.

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22. R. Stoessiger. Leaving School in Rural Tasmania. (Education Department of Tasmania, Hobart, 1980).

Table 12. What do you plan to do when you leave school? (Year 9 and 10 students only)

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Haven't decided	198	18.5	132	16.7	152	14.9
Apprenticeship/ job training	422	39.4	338	42.7	405	39.8
University or College	207	19.3	97	12.2	119	11.7
Job as soon as possible	167	15.6	197	24.9	299	29.4
Other	69	6.4	27	3.4	37	3.6
No response	7	0.7	1	0.1	6	0.6
TOTAL	1070	100.0	792	100.0	1018	100.0

Table 13. Why did you decide not to go on with full-time education?

Reason	Western Australia (N = 190)		Queensland (N = 230)		Tasmania (N = 302)	
	No.	%*	No.	%*	No.	%*
Didn't like school or studying	45	23.6	61	26.5	61	20.2
Wanted to make money	59	31.0	85	37.0	111	36.8
Had a job lined up	85	44.7	78	33.9	116	38.4
None of my friends were going on	6	3.1	7	3.0	2	0.7
Parents couldn't afford it	13	6.8	42	18.3	38	12.6
Didn't think I was good enough	42	22.1	79	34.3	64	21.1
Parents wanted me to leave	5	2.6	11	4.3	5	1.7
TOTAL RESPONSES	255	-	363	-	397	-

* Percentage of respondents ticking each reason (respondents asked to tick all applicable reasons).

In all States the "pro-work" reasons for leaving are ahead of the "leave-school" reasons which in turn are well ahead of all other categories. The desire to get a job is a powerful impetus for leaving school.

The Tasmanian students did not leave school earlier than their mainland counterparts because of a disenchantment with schooling and few reported financial difficulties. The largest group of Western Australian leavers indicated that they left school because they had a job lined up. The Queensland leavers were most likely to indicate that they didn't consider themselves good enough to continue their education and to report financial difficulties.

Very few leavers (11-13%) considered it "likely" or "very likely" that they would return to full-time education some time in the future.

In summary, getting a job and earning money was the major reason given by rural students for leaving school. A dislike of school and not feeling good enough were also important reasons, more so in Queensland but less important in Tasmania. Financial difficulties were of some importance in Tasmania and were important to a number of Queensland students. In all States, the largest group of students planned to get an apprenticeship or some other job training. In Tasmania and Queensland, the next largest group planned to get a job as soon as possible, while in Western Australia the next largest group planned to go on to university or college.

4.3 Preparation for Transition

In the November questionnaire, students were asked to describe their father's and mother's jobs and the job that they expected on leaving school. These descriptions were rated on the degree of understanding that they demonstrated. The one person rated each student's descriptions. Two raters, working closely together, scored all the Tasmanian and Queensland questionnaires. The Western Australian responses were processed separately, on a different scale, and although the results are internally consistent, they cannot be compared directly with the other results. The Queensland and Tasmanian results are given in Table 14.

From Tables 14 and 15, it is clear that students had much less of an understanding of the job they expected than they had of their parents' jobs. For example, 61.4% of Queensland students had a good understanding, or better, of their fathers' jobs whereas only 33.7% had the same level of understanding of the job they expected for themselves. Similar results apply to the other two States. Given that some students would be expecting the same job as one of their parents, these figures indicate that parents and schools could do more to inform students about the jobs they were expecting to obtain.

Table 14. Students' understanding of jobs (percentages)

Understanding	Tasmania (N = 1018)			Queensland (N = 1043)		
	Father's	Mother's	Own Expected	Father's	Mother's	Own Expected
Very good	16.3	5.5	9.4	19.8	6.9	6.4
Good	32.6	19.6	20.5	41.6	20.1	27.3
Some	26.7	17.6	36.5	23.9	12.3	33.5
Inadequate	5.1	1.6	8.3	5.8	1.9	16.2
Don't know	0.9	0.1	4.8	0.4	-	1.2
No response	6.6	6.0	10.9	2.7	4.5	6.4
Not applicable	11.8	49.6	9.6	5.8	54.3	9.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note that about half the respondents do not have mothers working in paid employment.

Table 15. Understanding of jobs, Western Australian results. (Percentages, N = 1371)

	Father's job	Mother's job	Own expected job
Very good understanding	11.9	7.0	6.9
Some understanding	75.7	38.4	72.6
Don't know	2.8	0.6	1.7
No response	5.5	5.1	8.4
Not applicable	4.2	48.9	10.4
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0

Prior to leaving school, the school leavers had been asked who were their main sources of advice and who gave them the most useful advice. The results are shown in Table 16. Guidance and careers officers and teachers were much less consulted and valued compared with parents and family. In all States, careers teachers (guidance officers) are important as a source of advice, but were not as highly valued by the leavers. Careers teachers were most consulted and valued in Queensland. Only in Tasmania was the Commonwealth Employment Service (C.E.S.) a major source of advice and in that State it was more consulted and valued than were careers teachers. In Western Australia, the second largest group of leavers valued their own advice more than that of others.

Table 16. Job advice given to leavers (percentages)

	Western Australia* (N = 256)		Queensland (N = 230)		Tasmania (N = 302)	
	Main Source	Best Advice	Main Source	Best Advice	Main Source	Best Advice
Parents/family	48.8	46.5	49.1	43.5	34.1	33.8
Friends	0.8	0.8	2.6	2.2	2.3	3.6
Teachers	3.5	4.7	2.6	6.1	11.6	9.6
Employers	5.1	6.6	7.0	9.1	4.3	5.0
Guidance Officers/ Careers Teachers	22.3	9.4	31.3	18.7	15.9	12.6
C.E.S.	5.1	3.1	0.9	1.7	18.2	16.2
Other	-	0.4	1.3	0.9	4.0	1.7
Self/no-one	5.9	17.6	3.9	12.6	3.6	9.6
No response	8.6	10.9	1.3	5.2	5.9	8.0
TOTAL	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

* Includes those continuing their education.

All of the leavers who were interviewed were asked how the school had prepared them for work. Most of the leavers had had access to a careers teacher or guidance officer. Some had been given advice about job applications and job interviews. The latter help was more highly regarded than visitors talking about specific careers.

Most students who left to enter the workforce indicated in the May questionnaire that the careers advice they received at school was of at least some use when they were looking for a job. Table 17 shows that a sizeable number found the advice of no use at all. Tasmanian students were more appreciative of the advice given than students in the other States. In Tasmania over 80% of the leavers stated that they had received advice on how to cope with unemployment, while only just over 50% of Queensland and Western Australian leavers had received such advice.

In all States, the suggestion that more time should be spent at school preparing students for work received an overwhelmingly positive response with over 80% of the respondents in favour.

Table 17. When you were looking for a job, did you find that the advice given to you at school about careers and jobs was .... (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 185)	Queensland (N = 227)	Tasmania (N = 291)
Very useful	18	15	31
Of some use	51	62	54
No use at all	31	23	15
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Almost none of the leavers who were interviewed had had any contact with the school after leaving. Schools presumably do not see it as their role to undertake follow-up work with recent leavers to assist them with their transition to work.

While this section demonstrates the need for students to be better informed about the jobs they hope to obtain, and while leavers themselves feel that schools could do more in this direction, relying on schools alone may not be adequate. In fact, as Table 16 shows, leavers will inevitably receive much of their careers advice at home. Hence programmes to educate parents about career possibilities may even be of greater value than more careers education in schools.

4.4 Work Experience

Unfortunately, no questions about work experience were included in either questionnaire. However, many of the leavers who were interviewed made some reference to it.

Work experience was almost always regarded as useful, if only in the negative sense of eliminating a particular job from consideration. For example, a leaver who had worked at the local primary school found she didn't have the patience for teaching infants and decided against this type of work.

In some cases, work experience had led directly to employment, although in one case this may have deterred an able student from continuing with her education.

Work experience seems to have been most widely available to Year 10 students in Tasmania. Even so, a large number had missed out for a variety of reasons.

Given the value of work experience, it would seem that it should be incorporated into the program of all schools and should be as compulsory as any other school subject or activity.

5. TRANSITION : WORK AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In this chapter the early post school experiences of the school leavers will be described. As such it will be based on the questionnaire and interview data. It will examine the leaver's search for employment, their desire to work and outline their experiences of employment and unemployment.

5.1 The search for employment; where?

One of the major impressions emerging from the interviews was of young people who very much want to find work in their own areas.

For example, Mary had been planning to move to the city to do study for her Higher School Certificate (H.S.C). However, her father died and she felt she should stay with her mother. She had lived in the city when younger but prefers the country. She now works in the bakehouse in a job which will terminate when she turns 18.

Cathy was an excellent student at school and planned to be a teacher. However, she was sick of school and did not want to leave home as was necessary to do H.S.C. She found work with the drycleaner in a town within commuting distance from her home and hence chose to work rather than continue her education.

Danny remained unemployed in his area for three months to become qualified under the S.Y.E.T.P. scheme for the government subsidy to his employer, a chain saw repair service. He said he was not interested in applying for jobs in the city as he liked country living "because it's quieter here".

Janice had applied for a nurse's training position in the city. Notification of her acceptance for this training was not received for two months, by which time she decided that she liked her job in a local store so much that the prospect of leaving home had lost its appeal.

Julie hoped to be a hairdresser and work experience reinforced her desire. She had contacted a number of hairdressers on an individual basis and applied for shop assistant jobs as well, without success. She had only applied for local jobs as she did not want to leave home and her mother thought that she should not leave home for another couple of years as she was only 15.

Although the above examples have concentrated on females who had accepted low-status jobs rather than leave home, the initial questionnaire revealed that males were even more attached to their country areas. Table 18 indicates where males and females would like to work when they settle down. In all States males were much more likely to prefer a job "near home" than were females. There are some significant differences between the States. Tasmanian female students were much more interested in moving interstate, presumably reflecting the proximity and attraction of Melbourne.

Fewer Western Australian male students had a preference for their own area and more preferred other country areas and large towns or cities.

Table 18. If you could choose, where would you most like to work when you settle down? (percentages)

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	Male (N = 675)	Female (N = 695)	Male (N = 500	Female (N = 543)	Male (N = 510)	Female (N = 508
Near home	50.8	38.8	61.8	40.0	60.0	42.1
Other country area	15.4	15.8	15.0	16.8	12.8	10.6
Large town or city	17.8	25.2	12.2	31.7	10.0	25.6
Interstate	8.4	9.4	8.0	9.9	14.1	19.3
No response	3.3	2.7	3.0	1.6	3.1	2.4
Other don't care	4.3	8.0	-	-	-	-

In comparison to the preferences given in Table 18, students' expectations are given in Table 19. In all States, more students expected to end up working in a large town or city and less near home. In Tasmania, the change was most marked with the largest group of students expecting to work in the city. This could reflect less employment opportunities in rural Tasmania or closer proximity to the larger centres.

Table 19. Where do you expect you will be working when you finish your education? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 1371)	Queensland (N = 1043)	Tasmania (N = 1018)
Near home	39.4	46.9	36.4
Other country district	12.5	10.5	9.2
Large town or city	30.6	33.4	40.6
Interstate	5.3	7.1	10.5
Don't know/care	8.6	1.1	1.4
No response	3.6	0.9	1.9

The May questionnaire confirmed the leavers' preferences to work locally.

Table 20 shows that only 10-13% of the leavers had moved to get a job.

Table 20. Numbers moving to get work and places of work (major categories, percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 188)	Queensland (N = 230)	Tasmania (N = 302)
Moved to get a job	9.6	13.0	10.6
Working near home	71.4	45.6	32.8
Working in large town or city	4.3	13.4	21.5
Other	24.3	41.0	45.7

The table also shows that Western Australian students find work close to home, if anywhere, while it must be the proximity to larger centres that allows many more Tasmanian leavers to work there while still living at home.

It is clear that most of the leavers would be happy to remain in rural areas. Hence there is a decentralized workforce readily available if the economic situation in rural areas would allow its full utilization.

Students were asked in the initial questionnaire what they liked and disliked about their home districts and the results are given in Tables 21 and 22.

Table 21. What things do you like about your home town or district? (first response, percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 1371)	Queensland (N = 1043)	Tasmania (N = 1018
Environmental factors	33.6	42.9	47.0
Location	0.5	1.8	1.3
Social Factors	25.3	25.4	15.2
Family/friends	12.8	15.5	10.8
Economic factors	1.5	1.7	0.2
Everything	0.6	0.5	2.5
Nothing	8.1	4.2	8.2
Amenities	9.8	5.8	6.7
No response	7.7	2.0	8.3

Table 22. What things do you dislike about your home town or district? (first response, percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 1371)	Queensland (N = 1043)	Tasmania (N = 1018)
Economic factors	6.5	9.1	6.5
Size (insular)	4.4	13.3	9.3
Social factors	41.3	43.2	33.5
Location	4.4	5.6	2.8
Educational facilities	-	0.2	0.3
Everything	3.6	2.2	2.8
Nothing	13.1	10.4	20.4
Environmental factors	5.1	10.7	9.4
Other	11.3	0.8	3.9
No response	10.4	4.5	11.0

Environmental and social factors were seen as the most attractive features of the local area. Disadvantages were perceived as largely social in nature. Between 10% and 20% of respondents reported no disadvantages of their home districts.

In summary, the potential school leavers would prefer to stay in country areas. They particularly liked the environment and, apart from a limited social life, they saw few disadvantages in country living. Hence, if they are forced to leave their home areas to obtain employment or continue their education, many will choose to remain in the country and discontinue their education or accept low-status jobs.

5.2 The search for employment; how?

The methods used by the leavers who were employed at the time of the May questionnaire are given in Table 23.

In all States the major ways of finding employment was by a direct approach to the employer. The second most common method, used by more than a quarter of the employed in Tasmania and Western Australia and by over a third in Queensland, was by way of relatives and friends. Responding to a job advertisement in the paper was much less common while very few leavers used the Commonwealth Employment Services and other employment agencies or obtained their jobs through their schools.

Table 23. How did you get your job? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 149)	Queensland (N = 161)	Tasmania (N = 211)
Through the C.E.S.	6.0	5.6	11.4
Other employment agency	2.0	0.6	1.4
Newspaper advertisement	16.8	17.4	15.2
Relatives or friends	26.8	34.2	28.0
Contacting employers	44.3	37.9	38.9
Through schools	4.0	2.5	4.7
No response	-	1.9	0.5

The importance of contacts in obtaining jobs was confirmed by the interviews. For example, Angela, aged 17, had lived all her life in a country town and obtained a clerical position in the town because her 'father heard there was a vacancy'. Alan, aged 17, obtained an apprenticeship with the local mining company. His father is a senior employee of the company.

Sara had planned to be a lawyer. She was well above average as a student and had enjoyed her work experience in a lawyer's office. However, she would have had to move from her home to continue her education beyond Year 10. This would have separated her from her main interest, her horses. Consequently, when she heard of a horse equipment shop opening locally, she contacted the owner and asked for a job. She now runs the shop and also gets to work with the owner's horses. She much prefers this set-up to leaving home.

Several girls interviewed said they found their jobs by knowing a girl who was leaving (or being put-off on turning eighteen) and applying to the owner before the job was actually vacant.

The interviews also revealed that where jobs actually are advertised, there are dozens of young people applying for them.

Agencies such as C.E.S., which are not able to maintain a permanent presence in most country towns are not very useful to school leavers. The only group to make any significant use of the C.E.S. are those still unemployed! As Table 34 shows, most of the unemployed go to the C.E.S. in search of work at least occasionally, perhaps because they are forced to in order to satisfy the "work test" for unemployment benefits.

5.3 Desire to work

There is substantial evidence from the interviews that the school leavers desperately want work. Amanda, for example, served in a milk bar without pay. To external appearances

she had a regular job. She did this because she was "terribly bored" with having nothing to do.

Apart from the few local jobs that became available, she had applied for over 30 jobs in the city. She would have been happy to travel the 120 kilometres return each day as she could get a regular lift.

Trudy worked three days a week in a fruit shop, earning only $8.00 a week more than she received from unemployment benefits. She much preferred this to being bored at home while unemployed.

Beth was an average student, very personable and seemed eminently employable. She was "on call" at Coles, guaranteed work on Friday nights and Saturday mornings only. She had written to 29 hairdressers seeking employment for the following year.

Philip had managed to find a variety of casual labouring jobs in his area but neither an apprenticeship nor a steady job. He did not like being unemployed and worked without pay for a local service station.

Tammy had only managed to obtain two casual jobs since leaving school. She was very well presented when interviewed. The two jobs she obtained were both manual jobs. One was bagging potatoes, the other splitting scallops. As dirty, smelly and low paid as these jobs were, they were preferable to the boredom of being unemployed. Without them she would have "gone up the wall". Tammy admitted that while at school she thought it would be good to do nothing, but not anymore.

Toni wanted to get an animal nursing job on leaving school. She applied to all the local veterinarians with no success. She then asked at one of the larger veterinary practices if she could work without pay. Eventually they took her on in a permanent, paid position.

Ashley wanted to leave school but returned when he couldn't get a job. He applied for several apprenticeships and farm labouring jobs. He found that with so many people applying for each job, it often depended on who you knew. Although back at school, he continued to look actively for work.

Greg applied for apprenticeships at the local mill. However, he found it harder to get a job than he expected. About 180 other boys applied for the three apprenticeships available at the mill. He returned to school, but continued to apply for jobs.

When Robyn's attempts to find employment were unsuccessful, she worked with her father in his office. Her father encouraged her to shift to the city to seek employment, "because job opportunities for girls in this town are so limited". Her lack of employment was through no lack of trying. She had placed her name at every major store and business in town.

A few months after leaving school, Martha got a job in an orchard and then went on to packing apples until the end of the season. Since then, she had applied for a variety of jobs in her area ranging from office jobs to the bakehouse but with no success. She had been to most of the local employers. Martha said she is angry with people who say that there are jobs available if you look. "If there is a job", she said, "there is a stampede for it".

The above evidence is that country school leavers badly want work and readily accept unpleasant, casual and even voluntary jobs where they can find them. The interview data is supported by the questionnaire data presented in Section 5.6 and is further discussed there.

5.4 The numbers employed

The numbers of leavers in employment at the time of the second questionnaire (five to six months after leaving school) are given in Table 24.

Table 24. Numbers employed

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	151	77.8	161	70.0	211	69.9
Unemployed	43	22.2	69	30.0	91	30.1
TOTAL	194	100.0	230	100.0	302	100.0

The Tasmanian and Queensland unemployment rates are remarkably similar. Although the Western Australian areas have a lower rate of unemployment, it is not significantly so.

Many of the employed leavers only have part-time or temporary jobs as Table 25 shows.

Leavers who indicated that their jobs were not permanent were asked the reasons why. The main reason given was the nature of the work being seasonal or casual. The interviews revealed that most of those in seasonal work were likely to become unemployed within a few months.

The proportions of leavers with full-time permanent jobs were:

Western Australia - about 62%
Queensland - 55%
Tasmania - 51%

With only a little over half of the leavers obtaining substantive employment after almost six months in the workforce, the employment situation for rural school leavers must be regarded as unsatisfactory.

Table 25. Employment status

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed - full-time	135	89.4	141	87.6	180	85.3
Employed - part-time	16	10.6	20	12.4	28	13.3
No response	-	-	-	-	3	1.4
Permanent	128	84.8	133	82.6	161	76.3
Not permanent	23	15.2	28	17.4	46	21.8
Don't know	-	-	-	-	3	1.4
No response	-	-	-	-	1	0.5
Either part-time or not permanent	30*	20*	34	21.1	54	25.5
Full-time and permanent	120*	80*	127	78.9	154	73.1
Don't know	-	-	-	-	3	1.4
No response	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	151	100.0	161	100.0	211	100.0

* estimate only

5.5 The nature of employment

Table 26 shows the major occupational categories of the leavers who were in employment at the time of the May questionnaire.

The most important areas of employment are as craftsmen and foremen (mainly those apprenticed), shop assistants, clerical workers and farm workers.

The Western Australian figures are distinctive because of the greater proportion of apprenticed craftsmen and smaller proportion of farm workers and other labourers. The number of craftsmen jobs in the Pilbara region of Western Australia is possibly the reason for the differences. The opportunities for this type of employment presumably have resulted in the very high rate of employment of males in the Western Australian sample and the slightly lower unemployment in this State noted in Section 5.4. In Queensland, the second most important group is the farm worker category and the largest group is the clerical category.

Table 26. Major occupational categories of th employed leavers (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 151)	Queensland (N = 161)	Tasmania (N = 211)
Lower professional	2.0	3.1	-
Clerical	17.6	22.4	16.9
Craftsmen and foremen	23.5	16.2	18.0
Shop assistants	19.6	14.9	17.5
Operators/process workers	4.6	4.3	15.6
Personal and domestics	9.8	9.3	10.4
Farm workers	9.8	19.3	13.2
Labourers	8.5	5.6	7.6
Other/no answer	4.6	4.9	0.9

Tasmania is unusual in having more than three times the proportion of operatives and process workers compared to the other two States. This partly reflects the availability of seasonal employment in fruit and vegetable processing at the time of the questionnaire.

It is interesting to compare the jobs actually found by the employed leavers with the jobs they indicated six months earlier that they would prefer. The preferred jobs are given in Table 27.

Table 27. Preferred jobs of the employed leavers (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 134)	Queensland (N = 161)	Tasmania (N = 211)
Upper professional	3.7	1.9	5.9
Grazier	3.7	0.6	-
Lower professional	10.4	6.8	10.4
Farmer	4.5	1.9	2.8
Clerical	10.4	15.5	11.4
Armed Services/police	3.0	3.1	2.4
Craftsmen and foremen	27.6	24.2	29.9
Shop assistants	3.0	4.3	5.7
Operators/process workers	-	0.6	1.4
Personal and domestics	21.6	14.9	15.6
Farm workers	5.2	8.7	3.3
Labourers	-	-	1.4
Other/no answer	6.7	17.4	9.9

Nearly twice as many leavers in Tasmania would have preferred professional jobs as in Queensland, despite the former being Year 9 and 10 leavers only. This does not seem to reflect a lack of realism on behalf of the Tasmanian students because a comparison of the responses of all Year 9 and 10 students in both States shows negligible differences in their aspirations for professional employment. It seems to suggest that more of the Tasmanian students with higher aspirations have taken employment, presumably because of the previously mentioned difficulties in access to post-Year 10 education.

More Queensland leavers had a preference for clerical and farm work than in the other States, and these turned out to be important avenues of employment for them.

In all States very few leavers had a preference for work as shop assistants, however, many of them ended up in this type of employment. Personal and domestic work was much more popular (hairdressing comes into this category) particularly in Western Australia, but offers less prospect of employment. Both these categories are major employers of females and will be discussed in more detail in Section 6. In all States a craftsman's job was most preferred but only in Western Australia was that preference readily realised. In the other States significant numbers of would-be craftsmen presumably ended up as farm workers, labourers, operatives and process workers, or unemployed.

The employed leavers were asked to indicate how much they liked their present job and the results are given in Table 28.

Table 28. How much do you like your job? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 151)	Queensland (N = 161)	Tasmania (N = 211)
Very much	52.0	50.9	45.5
Quite a lot	40.1	37.3	40.3
Not much	7.2	10.4	10.4
Not at all	0.7	1.2	1.4
No response	-	-	2.4

A very large majority of the employed leavers liked their jobs. They indicated that they most liked the nature of the work.

The leavers were asked to indicate the most important reason in their choice of a job. As Table 29 shows, "I would like this job" was selected by a considerable majority. Over 10% of employed leavers chose "Hard to get any other job" as

the most important reason for their choice of work. Parental wishes or family and friends in the same work were considered to be important by very few leavers.

Table 29. When you chose your job, how important were each of the following reasons? Which do you think was the most important? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 151)	Queensland (N = 161)	Tasmania (N = 211)
Job is well paid	8.0	6.8	7.6
Parents want it	5.3	1.9	1.9
Hard to get any other	12.7	14.3	11.4
Friends doing same kind of job	-	0.6	0.5
I would like this job	62.7	64.0	63.0
Fairly easy to get	5.3	1.2	4.7
Someone in family has job	-	0.6	1.9
Wanted job that helps others	6.0	8.1	4.3
No response	-	2.5	4.7

5.6 Being unemployed

Nearly 28% of the 726 school leavers surveyed were unemployed six months after leaving school. Only a minority of leavers went immediately into a job, while the majority experienced several months of unemployment. For those unemployed, when surveyed, the length of unemployment is given in Table 30. About half of the unemployed have been out of work for more than three months.

Table 30. How long have you been unemployed? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 43)	Queensland (N = 69)	Tasmania (N = 91)
More than 13 weeks	55.8	49.3	51.6
8 - 13 weeks	14.0	26.1	13.2
4 - 8 weeks	14.0	7.2	5.5
Less than 4 weeks	14.0	14.5	27.5
No answer	2.3	2.9	2.2

There is evidence that the unemployed are not shy of work. Many of the interview segments described earlier give an indication of how hard the unemployed have searched for employment. In the Tasmanian sample only 22 leavers (7.3%) had not had some sort of job since they left school, and this group had averaged over 5 job applications each since they left. The responses of the unemployed when asked if they were presently looking for work are given in Table 31.

Table 31. Are you looking for a job right now? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 43)	Queensland (N = 69)	Tasmania (N = 91)
Yes	86.0	87.0	93.4
No	11.6	8.7	5.6
No answer	2.3	4.3	1.1

Most of the unemployed had applied for a job within the last month as Table 32 shows.

Table 32. When did you last apply for a job? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 43)	Queensland (N = 69)	Tasmania (N = 91)
Less than 4 weeks ago	72.1	71.0	72.5
4 - 8 weeks ago	4.7	11.6	14.3
8 - 13 weeks ago	9.3	4.3	2.2
13 weeks ago	9.3	7.2	4.4
No answer	4.7	5.8	6.7

Any suggestion that the high rate of unemployment in these rural areas is a reflection of a "dole bludger" mentality is not supported by the above data, or by the relatively small numbers actually on unemployment benefits, as Table 33 indicates.

Table 33. Are you receiving unemployment benefits? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 43)	Queensland (N = 69)	Tasmania (N = 91)
Yes	65.1	42.0	54.9
No, but have applied for benefits	14.0	24.6	18.5
No and have not applied for benefits	18.6	31.9	23.1
No answer	2.3	1.5	3.3

Only a little over half the unemployed leavers were on unemployment benefits. Over a fifth of them had not even applied for benefits. The proportion on benefits was lowest in Queensland where nearly a third of the unemployed had not applied for benefits.

In Section 5.3, some of the reasons why the leavers so badly want to work were recounted. Many of the unemployed mentioned the boredom of having nothing to do. The only exceptions were those living on farms. They seem to have more to do, usually helping with the farm work. Boredom seems to be especially bad for females in country towns in areas where there are few seasonal jobs.

Some idea on how the unemployed group spend their time comes from their indication of how often they undertake the activities given in Table 34.

Table 34. How often do you do each of the following? (percentages)*

	Western Australia (N = 43)			Queensland (N = 69)			Tasmania (N = 91)		
	Never	Occasionally	Weekly or Daily	Never	Occasionally	Weekly or Daily	Never	Occasionally	Weekly or Daily
Go to C.E.S.	32.6	34.9	27.9	21.7	46.4	28.9	29.6	52.7	13.2
Go to centres for unemployed people	76.7	9.3	7.0	73.9	10.1	7.2	59.3	26.4	7.7
Work around home	2.3	20.9	74.4	1.4	11.6	85.5	3.3	30.8	60.4
Work voluntarily in the community	48.8	39.5	2.3	50.7	36.2	10.1	57.1	27.5	8.8
Do odd jobs for money	27.9	55.8	11.6	31.9	47.8	18.8	35.2	52.7	6.6
Hang around with friends	16.3	39.5	37.2	24.6	43.5	28.9	29.6	39.6	24.2
Go looking for jobs	4.7	46.5	44.2	5.8	39.1	53.6	7.7	40.7	48.4
Watch T.V.	4.7	51.2	39.5	2.9	43.5	52.1	2.2	48.4	45.1
Attend courses to improve job chances	81.4	7.0	7.0	82.6	8.7	4.3	74.7	8.8	8.8

* "Weekly" and "Daily" categories are grouped for convenience of display.

This table is actually a guide to what the leavers don't do in that the greatest number of responses are in the "never" and "occasionally" categories. Attending courses, going to centres for the unemployed, working voluntarily and doing odd jobs are all fairly rare activities. Even spending time with friends is not a regular activity, especially in Queensland and Tasmania where less than 30% of the leavers do it "weekly" or "daily". As will be discussed in Chapter 6, it is mainly the males who manage to get out to be with their friends.

Job searching is a reasonably common activity as is watching T.V. However, it is only working at home that is done daily by a majority of students. Queensland leavers most frequently work at home while those in Western Australia more often meet their friends than in the other States.

This picture of the unemployed spending much of their time isolated at home, working about the house and watching T.V. is not a pleasant one. The interviews tend to reinforce the picture but also add the consequent unhappiness (sometimes despair) of the young people living this existence for extended time periods. Some of the interview segments reported in Section 5.3 provide comment on the boredom associated with unemployment.

When asked if they were worried much about unemployment, the unemployed overwhelmingly chose "It worries me a lot" from three alternatives, These results are shown in Table 35.

Table 35. How much does being unemployed worry you? (percentages)

	Western Australia (N = 43)	Queensland (N = 69)	Tasmania (N = 91)
It worries me a lot	79.1	82.6	75.8
It doesn't matter much	14.0	14.5	14.3
It doesn't worry me at all	2.3	1.4	6.7
No response	4.7	1.4	3.3

About half the unemployed showed limited optimism in that they expected to be unemployed for only a few months longer. A much smaller number (14 - 23%) were very pessimistic about their chances of ever getting a job. Table 36 shows the duration of unemployment anticipated by the unemployed school leavers. Females were less likely than males to be optimistic about finding work.

Table 36. How long do you think you might be unemployed?

	Western Australia (N = 43)	Queensland (N = 69)	Tasmania (N = 91)
For a few months	51.2	49.3	56.0
For much of the year	25.6	24.6	20.9
Indefinitely	16.3	23.2	14.3
No response	6.9	2.9	8.8

6. SPECIAL GROUPS

Early in the study four groups were identified for more intensive examination by interviews. They were: females whose school potential appeared greater than their employment status, intending leavers who actually returned to school, those in stable employment and the unemployed. Combining this information with the questionnaire data provided the information for this section.

6.1 Female leavers

The previous sections have already indicated that female leavers face more problems than their male counterparts.

Their major problem is finding work. As shown in Table 37, the female unemployment rates are much higher than those of their male counterparts. In Western Australia, male unemployment is only a sixth of the female rate.

Table 37. Do you have a job now? (percentages)

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	Male (N=97)	Female (N=101)	Male N=110)	Female (N=120)	Male (N=153)	Female (N=146)
Yes	93.8	62.4	77.3	63.3	78.9	60.3
No	6.2	37.6	22.7	36.7	21.1	39.7

In that State, 86% of the unemployed are female, but this is largely due to an exceptionally low rate of male unemployment and this results in the State's lower unemployment rate noted in Section 5.4. The female unemployment rate is similar in all three States, ranging from 37 to 40%.

But even of those in employment, the females are more likely to have part-time positions as Table 38 shows. The relatively depressed situation of female leavers in Western Australia is further documented by this table, with the largest percentage of females in part-time employment. In all States, less than half the female leavers had found a full-time, permanent job, six months after leaving school. The interviews indicated that many of those employed in part-time and casual jobs were employed in seasonal rural industries and were almost certain to be unemployed when the season ended.

Females have very different job expectations from males. While at school the females indicated that they would prefer jobs as lower professionals (e.g. nurses and teachers), personal and domestic workers (e.g. hairdressers) and as clerical workers. Males preferred jobs as craftsmen and as upper professionals (e.g. lawyers and doctors). The actual jobs obtained by the school leavers are given in Table 39.

Table 38. Percentages of employed males and females with part-time positions

	Western Australia		Queensland		Tasmania	
	Male (N=91)	Female (N=64)	Male (N=85)	Female (N=76)	Male (N=123)	Female (N=88)
Full-time	94.5	76.5	88.2	86.8	89.4	79.5
Part-time	5.5	23.4	11.8	13.2	9.8	18.2
No response	-	-	-	-	0.8	2.3

Table 39. Major employment categories of the employed leavers

	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
Clerical	22	7.4	76	33.3
Craftsmen and Foremen	97	32.7	3	1.3
Shop Assistants	16	5.4	75	32.9
Operatives	29	9.8	18	7.9
Personal and Domestics	19	6.4	33	14.5
Farm Workers	65	21.9	9	4.0
Labourers	36	12.1	2	0.9
Other	13	4.3	12	5.3
TOTAL	297	100.0	228	100.0

The males largely achieved craftsmen's jobs (apprenticeships) as preferred although significant numbers ended up employed in unskilled areas, against their preferences.

However, the second largest group of females ended up as shop assistants whereas only a small percentage indicated a preference for this work originally. For example of the Tasmanian leavers nearly 40% of those who became shop assistants had indicated a preference for professional jobs.

This illustrates one of the major difficulties for girls leaving school in the country. There are very few desirable jobs available to them. For clerical jobs they have to move to the city or large towns. The jobs associated with rural industries are often part-time or temporary. Shop jobs are among the few substantial positions available.

But even shop assistants jobs may not be satisfactory in the long term. The interviews indicated that female shop assistants were often put off when they turn eighteen because of the increase in their salaries. Furthermore, the interviews revealed several girls with good school results who had accepted shop assistants jobs rather than risk unemployment when they had completed their education. Those who would have left school early and taken such jobs in previous years presumably end up unemployed. This is confirmed for the Tasmanian sample in that of the 21 female leavers who had indicated a preference to be a shop assistant, 10 (48%) were unemployed in May.

It has been suggested that trade apprenticeships are one of the bright areas in youth employment and that this results from a distortion of the employment market, largely through Government subsidies, in favour of apprentices.[23] If this is so, the Government subsidies are totally sex biased with only three out of the total sample of 367 female leavers achieving a trade apprenticeship.

The dismal prospects for girls leaving school takes on tragic proportions when their isolation in the home is taken into consideration. As Section 5 showed, one of the major activities of the unemployed leavers is working at home while quite a large group rarely spend time with their friends. However, when males and females are compared, as in Table 40, some important differences emerge. In particular, it is the females who work around their homes on a daily basis and significantly more (at 0.02 level) females never spend time with their friends.

Table 40. How often males and females do the activities listed. (Percentages) (65 males and 138 females)

	Never		Occasionally		Once a Week		Daily		No response	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Go to C.E.S.	23.1	29.7	47.6	46.4	18.5	20.3	4.6	0.7	6.1	2.9
Go to centres for unemployed	67.7	68.1	21.5	15.2	3.1	5.1	-	4.3	7.7	7.2
Work around home	3.1	2.2	33.8	16.7	7.7	5.8	47.6	73.9	7.7	1.5
Work voluntarily	64.6	47.8	26.2	36.2	-	8.0	-	3.6	9.2	4.3
Hang around with friends	13.8	30.4	43.1	39.9	15.4	11.5	21.5	13.0	6.1	5.1
Go looking for jobs	3.1	8.0	43.1	40.6	16.9	25.4	32.3	23.9	4.6	2.2

23. R. Sweet, A Labour Market Perspective on Transition Programs. Paper presented to Conference of Tasmanian High School Vice-Principals (Department of Technical and Further Education, N.S.W., 1980).

Over 70% of females only occasionally or never spend time with their friends. Given this situation, it is no surprise that many females interviewed were keen to find employment and willing to accept unpleasant casual and even voluntary jobs where they could find them.

6.2 Unintended Stayers

A particular group of students known as "unintended stayers" was singled out for special study. They were students of school leaving age who, after indicating in 1978 that they would leave school, later returned to school at the commencement of the 1979 school year. Some indication of the size of this group is available from the Queensland sample where 61 unintended stayers were identified, compared to 230 actual leavers. Numerically this group is of importance.

The case studies provided valuable insight into the motivations of the unintended stayers. Most of those interviewed had a positive approach towards school. For some the transfer from a school ending at Year 11 to a new school was an unhappy experience. For example, Anne a 12th year student had decided to leave at the end of Year 11 because she was so unhappy in her new school. Only the encouragement of her family and her teachers persuaded her to stay at school to complete Year 12.

On the whole, the unintended stayers were "average" students. A number admitted that their results had been disappointing. About half of those returning did so in order to repeat a year and many indicated that they hoped to improve their grades. However, few believed that getting better results would improve their chances of getting a job.

Most admitted, however, that they would readily leave school if they could get a job. James, a Year 11 student, indicated that if he didn't get a job during the year he would leave at the end of the year and try again for an apprenticeship. John was repeating Year 10, and he was also looking for an apprenticeship. He would gladly leave school tomorrow if he was offered any sort of job. Still others indicated that they would not come back to school next year, even if they didn't get a job.

Elizabeth is in Year 11 and she intended to leave regardless of whether or not she obtained a job, as she felt she could not cope with Year 12 work. Andy didn't think he would go beyond Year 11, for the very same reason. David was repeating Year 10 but intended to leave at the end of the year because he felt he would not cope with Year 11.

It was clear that parents, particularly mothers, were very influential in encouraging their sons and daughters to return to school. Teachers were influential in the decision-making of some students. The main reason for returning to school was failure to get a job. Most were aware that getting a job would be difficult.

John had expected it would be fairly hard to find employment because many of his older friends had experienced some difficulty the year before. When he couldn't get a job, his mother encouraged him to go back to school to improve his results.

He felt that the main reasons for not getting a job were too much competition in the local area and it was not what you knew, but who you knew that was important.

David also thought it would be hard to get a job. He had applied for a range of jobs, bank officer, Navy recruit, shop assistant, during the vacation but was unsuccessful. His parents preferred him to go back to school rather than be unemployed and sitting around the house all day.

Anne was an extremely intelligent girl who decided that it would be beneficial for her to work for a couple of years before she commenced tertiary studies to have financial stability while studying. However, her job seeking efforts were not successful, so she decided to continue her education without a break.

From these studies a disturbing pattern emerges. Considerable numbers of students leave school at the end of Year 10 in the hope of getting a job. When they are unsuccessful they return to school in order to improve their results, or more commonly just to bide time until a job comes up. Generally their parents actively encourage them to return to school. Few are genuinely interested in completing high school, the majority being eager to leave if by chance they are offered a job.

The inescapable conclusion is that a large number of unintended stayers are but latent unemployed youth.

6.3 Unemployed versus employed leavers

It is useful to compare the characteristics of the unemployed and employed leavers.

It might have been expected that the two groups would differ in age structure, with a larger proportion of the unemployed coming from the younger age groups. However, there were no significant differences in any of the States, and the overall age distributions are given in Table 41.

Table 41. Age distributions of the employed and unemployed groups (percentages)

Age	Employed (N = 523)	Unemployed (N = 203)
14 or less	3.3	3.0
15	43.4	40.4
16	39.6	42.4
17 or more	13.8	14.3
TOTAL	100.0	100.0

The same situation is found if level of schooling attained is considered as would be expected from Table 41. If anything, Year 10 leavers do better than Year 11 leavers in finding jobs. This presumably reflects the larger number of females who stay on to Year 11.

The proportions of unemployed leavers show significant differences between the regions studied, as Table 42 shows. It was expected that the areas in the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program would have larger numbers of unemployed leavers, particularly the relatively depressed Huon and Burnett regions. Clearly this is not the case. The Huon figures are low because of seasonal employment in the apple industry, and many of the employed leavers had casual jobs. The interviews revealed that most of those employed in the apple industry in May were unemployed by July. Even so, the Derwent Valley has a significantly higher rate of unemployment. In the interviews, leavers from this area reported that they could find few jobs even to apply for.

Table 42. Unemployment among School Leavers in the Regions Studied

Region	No. Unemployed	%
Outer Wheatbelt*	13	16.9
South-West	23	29.5
Pilbara	7	21.2
Burnett*	33	30.3
Mackay	36	29.8
North-East	26	26.5
Huon*	19	18.4
Derwent Valley	46	45.5

* Disadvantaged Country Area

In Queensland, the Burnett area had much the same unemployment level as the more affluent Mackay region.

The Outer Wheatbelt area in Western Australia is not economically disadvantaged but is disadvantaged in terms of isolation and the restricted range of employment opportunities available. However, it has the lowest level of unemployment in the study.

It seems, at least with regards to school to work transition, that the concept of "Disadvantaged" country areas based on socio-economic data or isolation, does not accord with the actual situation facing school leavers.

This is not to say that socio-economic factors are not important. For example, Table 43 gives the employment status of the leavers for different fathers' occupations.

Table 43. Employment status for different fathers' occupations

	White Collar		Farmer		Semi-Skilled		Un-Skilled		Not Applicable/ No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	94	80.3	87	79.1	80	73.4	212	68.8	44	57.9
Unemployed	23	19.7	23	20.9	29	26.6	96	31.2	32	42.1
TOTAL	117	100.0	110	100.0	109	100.0	308	100.0	76	100.0

In this table, the original 16 point occupation scale has been collapsed to four major categories. There is a significantly higher (at the 0.05 level) unemployment rate for leavers whose fathers were unskilled workers than for those with fathers in higher socio-economic categories.

Similarly, as Table 44 shows, there is a much lower rate of unemployment for leavers whose fathers were employed full-time compared to other categories. Leavers whose fathers had high status jobs have only a little over half the unemployment rate of those whose fathers are not working full-time (compare Tables 43 and 44).

Table 44. Employment status of leavers whose fathers work full-time

	Fathers Work			
	Full-time		Other (e.g. Part-time Unemployed, etc.)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	453	73.5	64	61.5
Unemployed	163	26.5	40	38.5
TOTAL	616	100.0	104	100.0

There are even greater differences in employment rates depending on the actual job the leavers expected. The results are given in Table 45. However, these differences do not depend on the socio-economic status of the jobs but on the sex

of the respondents. In particular, the female leavers seeking jobs as lower professionals, shop assistants and domestics have two to three times the unemployment rate of their male counterparts seeking employment as (apprentice) craftsmen or as farm labourers.

Table 45. Job expected by employment status (major categories)

	Job Expected											
	Lower Professional		Clerical		Craftsmen		Shop Assistants		Domestics		Farm Labourers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	26	60.5	89	74.8	138	84.1	56	62.2	51	61.4	43	87.8
Unemployed	17	39.5	30	25.2	26	15.9	34	37.8	32	38.6	6	12.2
TOTAL	43	100.0	119	100.0	164	100.0	90	100.0	83	100.0	49	100.0

Both the Tasmanian and Western Australian reports show that the school results of the employed groups are significantly better than the results of the unemployed.* However, in both States there are large variations in unemployment rates between the regions studies (see Table 42) but no parallel changes in school results. This suggests that it is not poor school results leading to unemployable leavers, but rather it is a pre-existing tight employment market allowing employers to select those with the best results.

As Table 46 shows, there is a significantly lower rate of unemployment among those who definitely knew the job they wanted before they left school. This may be due in part to a number of students having a job arranged before they actually leave school. However, it is apparent that students who leave school without a clear idea of the job they want run a much greater risk of unemployment.

Table 46. How definite job plans are by employment status

	Know the Job I Want		Haven't Thought		Thought but No Idea		Trying to Decide		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	342	76.9	10	52.6	53	58.9	106	67.9	6	60.0
Unemployed	103	23.1	9	47.4	37	41.1	50	32.1	4	40.0
TOTAL	445	100.0	19	100.0	90	100.0	156	100.0	10	100.0

* The Queensland school results were not available because of collection difficulties.

Students' own predictions of the likelihood of unemployment are borne out to a significant degree as Table 47 shows.

Table 47. Predicted likelihood of unemployment (November '78) by employment status (May '79)

	Very Likely		Likely		Possible		Unlikely		Not at All Likely		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	55	59.1	60	69.8	237	68.1	85	85.9	77	85.6	3	75.0
Unemployed	38	40.9	26	30.2	111	31.9	14	14.1	13	14.4	1	25.0
TOTAL	93	100.0	86	100.0	348	100.0	99	100.0	90	100.0	4	100.0

Leavers who predicted that it was very likely that they would be unemployed have nearly three times the unemployment rate of those who considered it to be unlikely or not at all likely. Even those who felt that unemployment was possible have a much larger unemployment rate than those who believed it was unlikely. Again it seems that a significant group of students already had jobs arranged and hence considered unemployment unlikely.

Table 48 shows how the employed and unemployed leavers rated their chances of being successful in life before they left school. Very few students rated their chances of success worse than "fair". But those who considered their chances of being successful in life were "fair" have nearly twice the unemployment rate of those who believed their chances were "good" or better. Nearly half the leavers did not consider that they have a good chance of success in life and 37% of these remained unemployed six months after leaving school. Clearly rural students see getting a job as one of the major requirements to be successful in life. Even before they leave school many know that they are likely to be failures.

Table 48. Prediced chances of success by employment status

	Very Good		Good		Fair		Not Much Good		No Good At All		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Employed	73	82.0	223	79.4	204	63.2	12	60.0	3	75.0	2	66.7
Unemployed	16	18.0	58	20.6	119	36.8	8	40.0	1	25.0	1	33.3
TOTAL	89	100.0	281	100.0	323	100.0	20	100.0	4	100.0	3	100.0

The analysis of this section defines two groups. The first group has a much lower chance of unemployment. By the time they leave school they have a clear idea of the job they want and may even have a job arranged. They are most likely to expect to be employed as craftsmen and farm labourers and hence are mainly males.

The second group is the "at risk" group for potential unemployment. They are more likely to expect jobs in traditionally "female" areas. They are less definite about their job plans and know it is likely that they will end up unemployed. They see themselves as only having a "fair" chance of success in the future. This evidence suggests that, even before they leave school, the life chances of these young people have been seriously curtailed.

7. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Summary of findings

(i) The employment situation. The employment situation facing rural school leavers is grim. Six months after leaving school, 23% of Western Australian leavers and 30% of Tasmanian and Queensland leavers were unemployed. A little over half of the leavers had full-time, permanent jobs and the interviews indicated that those employed casually (the majority in seasonal work) were likely to be unemployed within two to three months.

(ii) Special problems of female leavers. The situation of female leavers in rural areas is particularly bad. In the Western Australia regions, nearly all the unemployed leavers are females. In Tasmania and Queensland they make up nearly two-thirds of the unemployed.

Whereas males obtain jobs as apprentice craftsmen, there are few local permanent jobs for females other than as shop assistants. Even these are likely to terminate when the leaver turns 18. Yet there is a trend in some areas for those with good school results to leave school and take these jobs rather than continue their education. Those with "average" results are only likely to get seasonal work or become unemployed.

When they are unemployed, the females (much more than the males) are largely isolated. They have little contact with their friends or centres for unemployed. Their major activity is doing housework. Not surprisingly they very much want to work and the interviews revealed examples of females accepting unpleasant, casual and even voluntary jobs. The females have access to only the narrow range of jobs which have been regarded as "traditionally female" occupations. There are few employment, training or apprenticeship schemes which involve females in rural areas.

(iii) Retention in full-time education. The Tasmanian students studied were much more likely to leave school after Year 10 than those in Queensland and Western Australia.

When the rural areas are compared with the States as wholes the proportions continuing to Year 11 in both Western Australia and Queensland are slightly lower. There is a much greater discrepancy in Tasmania with the rural areas having little over half the Year 11 retention of the whole State.

The Tasmanian situation could not be explained by a general lack of educational provision, a poorly educated population, lower economic status, or by poorer academic performance.

The most convincing explanation is that the termination of Tasmanian schools at Year 10 and the necessity to move (or travel) to the city for Year 11 studies discourages a significant proportion of the Tasmanian students from continuing with their education.

Thus, the rural Tasmanian students suffer a double disadvantage. Firstly, they must move to a different institution to continue beyond Year 10. Secondly, they have poor access to these institutions. The larger proportion continuing to Year 11 in Western Australia is possibly due to the availability of alternative and terminating courses.

(iv) The desire to work. The school leavers want work. Some had made large numbers of unsuccessful job applications. Examples were noted of hundreds of young people applying for particular jobs. Any suggestion that the high rate of unemployment in these rural areas is a reflection of a "dole bludger" mentality is ruled out by their efforts to find work and because only a little over half the unemployed leavers were on unemployment benefits. Over a fifth of them had not even applied for benefits.

(v) Desire to remain in country areas. Two thirds (or more) of the males and over half the females originally surveyed indicated a desire to work in country areas. Between 10% and 13% of the school leavers indicated that they had moved to get employment. Of the rest, Western Australian leavers find work near home, if anywhere, while proximity to larger centres allowed considerable numbers of Tasmanian leavers to work in large towns or cities without moving from their areas. This also appeared to be the case in the Mackay Region in Queensland. The potential school leavers liked their home areas and could see few disadvantages apart from a limited social life.

The evidence suggests that if students are forced to leave their areas to obtain employment or continue their education, many will choose to remain in the country and discontinue their education or accept low-status jobs.

(vi) Disenchantment with school. The survey data indicates that a substantial number of leavers were disenchanted with school and this was mentioned in many of the interviews. Although many students indicated that they had a reasonable expectation of being unemployed, they left school anyway.

(vii) Understanding of jobs. The potential leavers had much less of an understanding of the job they expected for themselves than they had of their parents' jobs. This suggests that there are considerable opportunities for school transition programs to improve students' knowledge of likely jobs either through work experience, work observation or by providing more information.

(viii) School transition advice Leavers obtained their careers advice largely from parents and family. Careers teachers, guidance officers and other teachers were less consulted and their advice was less valued. The interviews indicated that few leavers had consulted a careers teacher on a regular one-to-one basis.

The study revealed very few examples of schools assisting their students after they had left. Leavers had not consulted careers or other teachers since the end of school.

(ix) Work experience. Work experience proved valuable to leavers who had participated in it. Although it was usually available in schools, a surprising number of leavers had missed out.

(x) Finding work. The major methods of finding employment were by a direct approach to employers or by way of relatives and friends. Having the right personal contacts seem to be very important in finding a job.

Agencies such as C.E.S., which are not able to maintain a permanent presence in rural areas, are not very useful to school leavers. The only group to make any use of the C.E.S. are those still unemployed, possibly because they are forced to by the "work test".

(xi) Employment obtained. In all three States a craftsman's job (apprenticeship) was most preferred, but only in Western Australia was that preference readily obtained. Clerical work, shop assistants jobs and labouring (farm and other) were the other major employment categories. However, only the former was stated as the preference of a significant group of leavers.

A very large majority of the employed leavers liked their jobs.

(xii) Unintended stayers. A considerable number of students who indicated that they planned to leave school actually returned to school the following year. A large number of these are active in the job market and would seem to be latent unemployed.

(xiii) Disadvantaged country areas. The three disadvantaged country areas in this study (the Huon, Burnett and Outer Wheatbelt regions) did not present more problems than the other areas. The assumption that areas with low socio-economic status or that very isolated regions will have students who are poorer in basic skills and who encounter more difficulties on leaving school, is not supported by this study.

(xiv) Among the school leavers, the study has identified an "at risk" group for unemployment. They are less definite about their job plans and more likely to expect to work in traditionally "female" areas. They know it is likely that they will end up unemployed and see themselves as only having a "fair" chance of success in the future. The life chances of these young people have been seriously curtailed even before they leave school.

7.2 Recommendations

The recommendations that follow do not apply to any one State and are not restricted to educational bodies. They should be regarded as a list of possible actions for schools, community groups and Government bodies at all levels.

(a) Rural secondary schools should:

(i) make major efforts to improve the employment prospects of their female leavers. This could include -

* encouraging girls to seek careers via apprenticeships;
* encouraging girls to take trade courses. This also requires girls to study mathematics and science at the highest levels;
* provision of a wide range of non-traditional employment models. For example, schools could bring females who are working in trade and craft areas to work in the school; and
* schools must enlist the support of parents, employers, unions and local community groups to promote the idea that girls should be employed in non-traditional areas.

(ii) develop comprehensive transition programs designed to facilitate a smooth transition of students from school to the variety of situations they will experience in adult life. As part of this program schools could -

* "follow-up" their ex-students on a regular basis. This will provide the necessary basic data on which the transition program can be built and may reveal opportunities where schools can directly help their leavers;
* take the initiative to see that careers teachers etc. are available to help unemployed leavers with careers information, job applications, etc.;
* ensure that work experience is part of the core curriculum of potential school leavers. Experience of further education facilities should also be provided;
* maintain accurate information about a wide range of occupations, the supply and demand for jobs and the range of higher secondary, technical and external studies courses available to students. This should include details of scholarships and allowances available to students and their parents; and
* accept that students receive most of their transition advice from their families and their adult friends and so should ensure that a considerable amount of careers advice is given to parents and the community at large.

(iii) develop less "subject" orientated programs, more directed towards preparing students for post-school life, including the following:

* Pre-employment courses in Year 11 such as the Western Australian alternative and terminating course which may be associated with the higher Year 11 retention rates in that State;
* pre-apprenticeship courses at Year 11 level, especially for girls; and
* "link" courses with further education institutions.

(b) The Schools Commission should:

(i) focus attention on the problems of female school leavers by -

* sponsoring a national conference on this topic;
* establishing a multi-interest group to produce recommendations and action proposals for schools, Governments, etc.;
* commission further research to investigate the social consequences of unemployment for the girls studied; and
* fund some pilot developmental projects aimed at encouraging rural schools, female students and communities to take a wider view of suitable female employment.

(ii) re-examine the concept of rural disadvantage. It may be necessary to regard all rural areas as disadvantaged and to ensure that all get additional funding either concurrently or sequentially;

(iii) prepare and present a case to the Commonwealth Government to -

* tackle rural disadvantage on a wider scale;
* undertake initiatives that are particularly designed to assist rural school leavers; and
* undertake special programs for girls.

(iv) closely monitor the OECD/CERI project on Education and Local Development to find ways in which the education system, including the Commission itself, can contribute to development in rural areas; and

(v) commission research into how the nature of local areas affects student decision-making and aspirations for further education and careers and how students can be encouraged to take the widest possible view.

(c) The TAFE Council of the Tertiary Education Commission should:

* sponsor a special project designed to attract female rural school leavers into further education courses;
* give additional financial support to state authorities for the provision of technical and further education in rural areas; and
* commission a research project aimed at finding the most appropriate ways to provide technical and further education to rural communities.

(d) The Commonwealth Minister for Education should establish a high-level working party to examine and recommend on ways of implementing a "Youth Guarantee" or some similar scheme that ensures that acceptable post-school roles (e.g. work, further study, additional work experience, community service or some combination of these) are available to all school leavers.

Only the implementation of a scheme such as this seems capable of significantly alleviating the plight of rural school leavers.

(e) The Commonwealth Employment Service should maintain a presence in all rural areas. In many centres, it may be possible for the local school to provide office space and facilities for the mutual benefit of both students and the C.E.S.

(f) Commonwealth Transition Programs (including the transition from school to work program and the Education Program for Unemployed Youth) should:

* be largely aimed at leavers with the greatest need (e.g. rural females);
* include specific projects aimed at reducing the isolation of rural school leavers;
* include projects designed to encourage the employment of female leavers in non-traditional areas; and
* include projects which lead directly to the employment of rural school leavers.

(g) The Commonwealth Department of Employment and Youth Affairs should:

* ensure that vocational information and counselling is available to parents and the community in general, as well as school leavers.

(h) The Commonwealth Government should:

* initiate job creation, job sharing and other schemes designed to make more work available;
* locate appropriate sections of the public service in rural areas;

* develop financial measures to reduce the economic pressures on single income families;
* offer additional incentives to encourage employers to apprentice school leavers with the greatest need (e.g. rural females);
* support industries that employ numbers of young females in rural areas;
* require Government departments to explicitly recognise their roles in rural areas and to have policies aimed at assisting local development; and
* encourage industries to move to rural areas to employ the pool of young workers available there.

LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF SCHOOL-LEAVERS IN COUNTRY AREAS

Explanatory notes regarding background information

Background information required for the study of school-leavers in country areas can be divided into two sections (1) information relating to the study area and (2) information relating to the schools specifically selected for study.

For both (1) and (2), certain items of information are considered to be core information. Other items are considered to be optional, depending on their availability and their relevance to the particular study area.

1. The Study Area

Core information required for the study area, comprises three parts :

PART A aims to provide a social and economic setting for the study. Much of the section will be descriptive and based on subjective assessment, but it is anticipated that relevant sources, such as Bureau of Agricultural Economics surveys, will also be used.

PART B is based entirely on census information and aims to provide specific demographic information about the study area. Most of the information in this section is from the 1976 Census and can be found in the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication entitled, Nine Pages of Collection District Summary Data. The information is available for each state, for local government areas in each state, and for collector's districts. The system of referencing used in the document is standard throughout Australia and is the system used in Part B.

At present, this ABS document is not available for all states and the following is an indication of availability, based on ABS predictions :

Tas. and N.T.	July, 1978
W.A.	August, 1978
S.A.	September, 1978
All other states	Late 1978

It is suggested that state Education Departments keep in contact with their local ABS offices to find out when the document will be available.

The information required for section 7.1 (geographic distribution of the population) is to be found in a separate ABS publication for each state entitled, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1976 Census : Population and Dwellings in Local Government Areas and Urban Centres (Preliminary). The information required is taken from the tables showing "Urban centres and bounded localities with 200 or more persons".

PART C aims to provide information about educational provision in the study area. The main source for this information will be Department of Education records within individual States.

2. Selected Schools

Core information required for this section is divided into two parts :

PART A aims to provide an indication of the characteristics of the schools : i.e. enrolment trends, pupil/teacher ratios and staff characteristics.

PART B aims to provide an indication of educational outcomes from the schools, both in terms of student retention and student performance.

THE STUDY AREA

PART A : GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. General description of the study area, indicating the distinctive features i.e., physical, geographical, social, historical, ethnic etc. Main population centres and service centres should also be identified and described and located on a map of the area.

2. General description of features of the local economy, with particular reference to :

(i) the major employers and industries in the area
(ii) indications of trends in industrial development or decline in the area
(iii) present and future employment opportunity in the area, particularly as regards future school-leavers.

THE STUDY AREA

PART B : SOCIAL INDICATORS BASED ON CENSUS INFORMATION

1. POPULATION

1.1 Number (item No. 2)*

Population	1966 Census+	1976 Census
No. of males No. of females		
TOTAL		

* The item No's. referred to are consistent with the reference system used by A.B.S. in Nine Pages of Collection District Summary Data.

+ For the relevant information from the 1966 Census see, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1966 Census of population and housing : Population and Dwellings in Local Government Areas, Vol. 4. (a separate part is published for each state).

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1.2 Age (item No. 6)

Age last birthday	No. of males	No. of females
0-4 5-9 10-14		
Sub-total less than 15		
15-19 20-24		
Sub-total 15-24		
25-34 35-44 45-54 55-65 65+		
Sub-total 25-75+		
TOTAL		

1.3 Use of English language (item No. 7)

Number (total population) using English only _____

Number (total population) using English,
1 other language and 2+ other languages _____

Number (total population) using no English _____

1.4 Marital status (item No. 3)

Marital Status	No. of males	No. of females
Never married under 15 Never married 15+ Now married Separated, widowed or divorced		
TOTAL		

1.5 Number of persons in family (item No. 32)

Total number of families in private dwellings _____

Number of families with 5 or more persons in family _____

2. LABOUR FORCE

2.1 Occupational status (item No. 21)

Number of males in the labour force _____

Number of females in the labour force _____

Number of unemployed males in the labour force _____

Number of unemployed females in the labour force _____

Number of males aged 15+ not in the labour force _____

Number of females aged 15+ not in the labour force _____

2.2 Age of the labour force (item No. 22)

Number of males 15-19 in the labour force _____

Number of males 20-24 in the labour force _____

Number of females 15-19 in the labour force _____

Number of females 20-24 in the labour force _____

.../7

2.3 Marital status of the labour force (item No. 23)

Number of now married females in the labour force _____

2.4 Number of jobs usually working in (item No. 28)

Total number of employed males _____

Number of males with two or more jobs _____

3. OCCUPATION (item No. 25)

3.1 Occupational distribution of the employed population by sex (using all occupation categories).

4. INCOME

4.1 Family income (item No. 31)

Total number of families in private dwellings _____

Number of families with annual incomes of $7000 or less * _____

Number of families with annual incomes over $18000 _____

Number of families with incomes not stated _____

4.2 Pensions or social security benefits received (item No. 20)

Total number of males receiving pensions _____

Number of males receiving unemployment benefits _____

Number of males not receiving pensions _____

Total number of females receiving pensions _____

Number of females receiving unemployment benefits _____

Number of females not receiving pensions _____

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* The figure of $7000 p.a. is based on the average minimum adult male rate of $129 per week, for June, 1976. (see, ABS publication, Wage Rates and Earnings, June 1976).

5. EDUCATION

5.1 Age left school (item No. 14)

Number of males who have left school or never attended _____

Number of males who left school at 14 years of age or less _____

Number of females who have left school or never attended _____

Number of females who left school at 14 years of age or less _____

5.2 Qualifications - highest level obtained (item No. 15)

Number of males with no qualifications _____

Number of males with qualifications not known _____

Number of females with no qualifications _____

Number of females with qualifications not known _____

6. HOUSING

6.1 Nature of occupancy (item No. 44)

Total number of occupied private dwellings _____

6.2 Weekly rent (item No. 45)

Total number of rented occupied private dwellings _____

6.3 Structure of building (item No. 48)

Number of separate houses _____

6.4 Reason private dwelling unoccupied (item No. 49)

Number for sale _____

Number of unoccupied private dwellings _____

7. GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION

7.1 Urban centres and bounded localities with 200 or more persons (see reference in explanatory notes)

List the names of all population centres in the study area with a population of 200 or more and give the male and female population for 1971 and 1976.

PART C : EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

1. List all schools in the study area. Indicate (a) whether government or non-government and (b) whether primary, secondary or primary/secondary.

2. Briefly describe the structure of the school system in the study area. (Tasmania for example, has district schools and district high schools in rural areas, as well as primary schools and high schools).

3. Enrolment 1971 and 1978

School sector (govt. schools only)	August 1971 enrolments		August 1978 enrolments	
	Study area	State	Study area	State
Primary Secondary Post-Secondary				
Total				

4. Predicted enrolments 1979-1983 *

School sector (govt. schools only)	1979		1980		1981		1982		1983	
	Study area	State	Study area	State	Study area	State	Study area	State	Study area	State
Primary Secondary Post-Secondary										
Total										

* If figures are not available, please provide a written comment on expected enrolment trends in the areas indicated.

5. Indicate the extent to which the following provisions are available within the study area :-

(i) pre-school education

(ii) education at year 12 level

(iii) further education (including Universities and CAE's)

6. If no provision is made for further education within the study area, please comment in detail whether it is possible for students to continue to reside in the study area, while studying at an institute for further education.

Optional information related to the study area

1. Please indicate if there are students living in the study area, who are involved to Year 12 level in correspondence studies or schools of the air. Give some indication of (a) the number of students involved and (b) the courses studied.

2. If possible, give some idea of the extent of population movement into the study area. In the case of a study area, which comprises only one local government area, it will be possible to use information from the 1976 Census. (See item No. 5, Nine Pages of Collection District Summary Data)
Alternative sources of information might be unpublished theses, surveys conducted by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics etc.

3. Local Commonwealth Employment Services agencies may be able to provide details of the length of time that unemployed persons living in the study area, have been out of work.

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SELECTED SCHOOLS

PART A : SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

1. Enrolments in selected schools

Schools	August 1971 Enrolment	August 1978 Enrolment
Selected schools (list names) 1. 2. 3. etc.		
Total		

2. Predicted enrolments 1979-1983

Schools	Predicted enrolments *				
	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Selected schools 1. 2. 3.					
Total					

* See note on p.

3. Sex distribution of teachers

Schools	Full-time teachers, August 1978*	
	Male	Female
Selected schools 1. 2. 3. etc.		
Total		
All state secondary schools		

* Please indicate if the information provided for tables 5, 6 and 7 is also for August, 1978. If it is not, please indicate the number of full-teachers for the relevant year(s).

4. Gross student/teacher ratios, calculated by dividing the total number of students by the gross number of teachers. (See, A.S.C., Report for the triennium 1976-1978, p. 36)

Schools	Student/teacher ratio, August 1978
All selected schools	
All state secondary schools	

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5. Teacher experience

School	No. of beginning teachers	No. of teachers with < 2 years in present school	No. of teachers with > 5 years in present school
Selected schools 1. 2. 3. etc.			
Total			
All state secondary schools			

6. Teacher qualification, based on number of years of completed tertiary study. (See A.S.C., Report for the triennium 1976 - 1978, pp. 39, 40).

School	Completed years of tertiary study			
	Less than two	Two	Three	More than three
Selected schools 1. 2. 3. etc.				
Total				

7. Itinerant teachers, based on the number of teachers who have responsibilities in more than one government school.

School	No. of itinerant teachers
Selected schools 1. 2. 3. etc.	
Total	
All state secondary schools	

PART B: EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES

1. Student retention, (See, A.S.C., Report for the triennium 1976-1978, p. 32).

School	Student retention (1973 cohort)			
	1st year secondary school (1973)	Third last year (1976)	Second last year (1977)	Final year (1978)
Selected schools 1. 2. 3. etc.				
Total				
All state secondary schools				

2. Indicate the level of performance by students in selected schools on any measures of educational attainment. These may be those carried out by individual schools, or by the Education Department. Comparative information at the State level, or on an urban/rural basis, should also be provided, if possible.

Optional information for selected schools

1. Please provide a general comment on how course offerings (ie number of courses and levels offered) in the selected schools compare with course offerings in schools in an urban area of the state.

2. If possible, give an indication of the average time which students at the selected schools spend in daily travel to school. (to and from school inclusive).

APPENDIX 2

NOVEMBER (1978) QUESTIONNAIRE

Please do not write in this column

INTERSTATE SURVEY OF POTENTIAL SCHOOL LEAVERS

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

Please write in BLOCK CAPITALS

1. NAME (in full please) _____ [ ][ ][ ] 1 2 3

2. YOUR HOME ADDRESS _____

_____

State _____ Post Code _____ [ ] 4

3. SCHOOL _____ [ ][ ][ ] 5 6 7

[ ][ ] 8 9

(Please circle the number which applies to you or write in the space provided)

4. Sex

Male _____ 1

Female _____ 2 [ ] 10

5. How old are you?

13 years or less _____ 1

14 years _____ 2

15 years _____ 3

16 years _____ 4

17 years or more _____ 5 [ ] 11

6. Do you live away from your home during the week days of the school-term?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2 [ ] 12

Please do not write in this column

7. How do you usually get to school?

School bus _____ 1

Car _____ 2

Public transport _____ 3

Bicycle/walk _____ 4

□ 13

8. About how much time does it take you to get to school and back home again each day?
(Please make sure that you give your total daily travelling time)

Less than half an hour _____ 1

Half to one hour _____ 2

Between one and two hours _____ 3

Between two and three hours _____ 4

More than three hours _____ 5

□ 14

9. Please tell us (in numbers) how many brothers and sisters you have :

I have _____ older brothers and _____ older sisters.

I have _____ younger brothers and _____ younger sisters

□□□□ 15 16 17 18

10. In which country were you born? _____

□ 19

11. If you were not born in Australia, how many years have you lived in Australia? _____

□□ 20 21

12. Do your parents always use English to talk to each other at home?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2 (what other language do they use?

_____)

□ 22

□ 23

Please do not write in this column

13. Is your father (or step-father) working at present?

Yes. He works full-time _____ 1
Yes. He works part-time _____ 2
No. He is unemployed _____ 3
No. He is retired or on a pension _____ 4*
I do not have a father (or step-father) _____ 5*

* Go to question 16

24

14. What is the name of his job? (If he is unemployed, tell us the name of his usual job)

_____
_____
_____

25 26

15. Please tell us, as carefully as you can, what he does in this job:

_____
_____
_____
_____

27

16. Does your mother (or step-mother) have a paid job?

Yes. She works full-time _____ 1
Yes. She works part-time _____ 2
She usually works but is not working at present _____ 3
No. She does not have a paid job _____ 4*
I do not have a mother (or step-mother) _____ 5*

* Go to Question 19.

28

Please do not write in this column

17. What is the name of her paid job?
(If she is not working at present, tell us the name of her usual job).

_____

_____

_____

29 30

18. Please tell us, as carefully as you can, what she does in this job :

_____

_____

_____

31

19. Do you live on a farm or station?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2 (Go to Q. 24)

32

20. Does your family own this farm or station?

Yes, it belongs to my family _____ 1

No, my father is the manager _____ 2

No, my father works on the farm or station _____ 3

33

21. What kind of farm or station is it?

Wheat or sheep _____ 1

Grazing property _____ 2

Fruit, vegetable, sugar-cane or poultry _____ 3

Mixed farm _____ 4

Dairy farm _____ 5

Other (please specify) _____ 6

34

Please do not write in this column

22. When you finish your education, do you expect to work full-time on this farm or station?

Yes _____ 1
No _____ 2
Not sure _____ 3

[ ] 35

23. If you answered "no" to question 22, please tell us why you don't expect to be working full-time on this farm or station :

_____
_____
_____
_____

[ ][ ][ ][ ] 36 37 38 39

24. Which grade are you in at school?

Grade 9 _____ 1
Grade 10 _____ 2
Grade 11 _____ 3
Grade 12 _____ 4

[ ] 40

25. If you have been a student at any <u>other</u> secondary school(s) please tell us the name of the school and the town it is in:

_____
_____
_____
_____

[ ] 41

[ ] 42

Please do not write in this column

26. When do you think you will leave school?

I'm not sure _____ 1
As soon as I reach the leaving age _____ 2
As soon as I find a job _____ 3
At the end of Grade 9 _____ 4
At the end of Grade 10 _____ 5
At the end of Grade 11 _____ 6
At the end of Grade 12 _____ 7

43

27. What do you plan to do when you leave school?

I haven't decided yet _____ 1
Get an apprenticeship or do some job training course _____ 2
Go to university of college _____ 3
Get a job as soon as possible _____ 4
Other (please specify) _____ 5

_____

_____

44

Please tell us more about your plans for furt... study, for job training or an apprenticeship:

Please do not write in this column

28. How definite are your job plans?

I know the job I want _____ 1

I haven't thought much about jobs yet _____ 2

I've thought about jobs but still have no idea about the job I want _____ 3

I'm trying to decide between different kinds of jobs _____ 4

45

29. What kind of job do you expect to get when you finish your education?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

46 47

30. What kind of work do you expect to be doing in this job?

_____

_____

_____

_____

48

Please do not write in this column

31. When you chose this kind of job, how important were the following reasons?

(For each reason put a tick in one box)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	
1. The job is well paid	☐	☐	☐	☐ 49
2. My father and mother would like me to have this kind of job.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 50
3. It would be hard for me to get any other sort of job near home.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 51
4 My friends at school will be doing the same kind of job.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 52
5. I am sure that I would like doing this kind of job.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 53
6. It will be fairly easy for me to get this kind of job.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 54
7. Someone in my family has this kind of job.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 55
8. I want the kind of job that helps other people.	☐	☐	☐	☐ 56

32. Which of these reasons do you think was the most important for you?

Reason No. _____ ☐ 57

Please do not write in this column

33. Do you think you would have a better chance of getting this kind of job if you lived in the city?

Yes _____ 1

No _____ 2

Wouldn't make any difference ___ 3

58

34. Please give us the reasons for your answer to question 33:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

59 60 61

35. Where do you expect that you will be working when you finish your education?

Somewhere near home _____ 1

In some other country district _____ 2

In a large town or city in my state _____ 3

In another state _____ 4

62

36. Do you think it is possible that you might be unemployed after you have finished your education?

Very likely _____ 1

Likely _____ 2

Possible _____ 3

Unlikely _____ 4

Not at all likely _____ 5

63

Please do not write in this column

37. How long do you think you might be unemployed?

Until Christmas _____ 1

Until the end of February _____ 2

For much of the year after leaving school ___ 3

Indefinitely _____ 4

64

38. How much would it worry you if you were unemployed?

It would worry me a lot _____ 1

It wouldn't matter much _____ 2

It wouldn't worry me at all _____ 3

65

39. How good do you think your chances are of being successful in life?

Very good _____ 1

Good _____ 2

Fair _____ 3

Not much good _____ 4

No good at all _____ 5

66

40. Who have you talked to about choosing a job?

_____

_____

_____

_____

67 68 69 70

Please do not write in this column

41. Who gave you the most helpful advice about choosing a job?

_____

_____

_____

_____

71 72

42. If you could choose any kind of job at all, what job would you most like to have?

_____

_____

_____

_____

73 74

43. If you could choose, where would you most like to work when you settle down?

Somewhere near home _____ 1

In some other country district _____ 2

In a large town or city in my state _____ 3

In another state _____ 4

75

Please do not write in this column

44. What things do you like about your home town or district?

76 77 78

45. What things do you dislike about your home town or district?

79 80 81

46. What are the really important things you would like to do in the next five years?

82 83 84

47. If somebody asked you, "Do you live in the country?" What would your answer be?

85

86

APRIL (1979) QUESTIONNAIRE

School Leavers in Country Areas

A NATIONAL STUDY

Please return to :
Research Branch,
Education Department,
G.P.O. Box 169 B,
HOBART. 7001.

PLEASE TURN OVER

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

INTERSTATE SURVEY OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

Please answer all questions that apply to you. Answer by putting a tick in the box that applies to you or by writing in the space provided.

Before starting the questionnaire please write the date on which you filled it in.

Date: / / 79

Please do not write in this column

[ ][ ]
1 2

[ ][ ]
3 4

1. If your address is now **different** from the one above, please write your new address in the space below.

_____

_____

State _____ Post code _____

[ ]
5

[ ][ ]
6 7

[ ]
8

Why have you changed your address?

My family moved	[ ]	1
To get a job	[ ]	2
To contine my education	[ ]	3
To get a place of my own	[ ]	4

[ ]
9

---

2. Are you now married?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2

[ ]
10

If yes and your surname has changed please write your new name in the space below.

_____

[ ]
11

Please do not write in this column.

3. What is your racial origin?

Please tick **ONE** box only.

European [ ] 1 Aboriginal [ ] 2

Torres Strait Islander [ ] 3 Pacific Islander [ ] 4

Other [ ] 5

[ ] 12

4. Are you at present doing any course of study?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2

[ ] 13

IF **NO** PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 9

5. What is your course of study?

_____

[ ] 14

6. What is the full name of your educational institution?

_____

[ ] 15

7. When do you expect to finish this course?

_____

8. Is this a full-time course?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2

[ ] 16

If you answered **YES** to question 8 this completes your part of the questionnaire.Thankyou for your help.

If you answered **NO** to question 8, please continue on to the next question.

Please do not write in this column

9. Why did you decide not to go on with full-time education?

(Tick all the boxes which apply to you)

Didn't like school or studying	[ ]	[ ] 17
Wanted to make money	[ ]	[ ] 18
Had a job lined up	[ ]	[ ] 19
None of my friends were going on	[ ]	[ ] 20
Parents couldn't afford it	[ ]	[ ] 21
I didn't think I was good enough	[ ]	[ ] 22
Parents wanted me to leave	[ ]	[ ] 23

10. Do you think that at some time in the future you might go back to full-time education?

Very likely	[ ] 1	
Likely	[ ] 2	
Not likely	[ ] 3	[ ] 24
Very Unlikely	[ ] 4	
Don't know	[ ] 5	

11. How many jobs have you applied for since leaving school?

[ ] [ ] [ ] 25 26

12. How many jobs have you had since leaving school?

Number of full-time jobs	[ ]	[ ] [ ] 27 28
Number of part-time jobs	[ ]	[ ] [ ] 29 30

Please do not write in this column.

13. When you were looking for a job, did you find that the advice given to you at school about careers and jobs was,

Very useful [ ] 1

Of some use [ ] 2

Of no use at all [ ] 3 [ ] 31

---

14. Where you given any useful advice at school on how to cope with unemployment? (e.g. what to expect, how to contact helpful organisations).

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2 [ ] 32

---

15. Do you think that more time should be spent at school preparing students for work?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2 [ ] 33

---

16. Do you have a job now?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2 [ ] 34

If **YES**, please go to questions on the pink sheet

If **NO**, please go to questions on the green sheet

Please do not write in this column.

If you have a job now, please answer all the questions on the pink pages.

17. Are you employed,

Full-time [ ] 1

Part-time [ ] 2

[ ] 35

18. Are you,

An apprentice [ ] 1

On a Government Training Scheme (e.g. NEAT, SYETP) [ ] 2

On a job training course [ ] 3

Doing none of these [ ] 4

[ ] 36

19. What is the name of your job?

_____

[ ][ ] 37 38

20. Is your job permanent?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2

[ ] 39

If NO please explain why

_____

_____

[ ] 40

21. Where is your place of work? (What town or district)

_____

_____

[ ] 41

Please do not write in this column.

22. Do you work on your family farm or station?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2 [ ] 42

23. How long have you been in your job?

Less than a month [ ] 1
1-2 months [ ] 2
2-3 months [ ] 3
3-4 months [ ] 4
More than 4 months [ ] 5 [ ] 43

24. How did you get your job? Tick the box which **best** applies.

Through CES or other Government agency [ ] 1
Through an employment agency [ ] 2
By responding to an advertisment in the paper [ ] 3
Through relatives or friends [ ] 4
By contacting place of employment myself [ ] 5
Through the school [ ] 6 [ ] 44

Please do not write in this column.

25. When you chose your job, how important were each of the following reasons? (for each reason put a tick in one box)

	Very Important	Important	Not Important	
1. The job is well paid	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 45
2. My father and mother wanted me to have this kind of job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 46
3. It was hard for me to get any other sort of job near home	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 47
4. My friends at school are doing the same kind of job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 48
5. I like doing this kind of job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 49
6. It was easy for me to get this kind of job.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 50
7. Someone in my family has this kind of job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 51
8. I wanted the kind of job that helps other people	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 52

26. Which one of the reasons do you think was the most important for you?

Reason No. [ ] 53

27. How much do you like your job

Very Much [ ] 1
Quite a Lot [ ] 2
Not much [ ] 3
Not at all [ ] 4

[ ] 54

Tell us what you do like and what you don't like about your job.

[ ][ ] 55 56
[ ] 57
[ ][ ] 58 59
[ ] 60

28. Do you think you will be in this job in 12 months time?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2 [ ] 61

Please do not write in this column.

29. How do you usually get to work?

Own car or motorcycle	[ ] 1	
Public transport	[ ] 2	
Bicycle or walk	[ ] 3	
Regular lift	[ ] 4	[ ] 62
I work at home	[ ] 5	
Other	[ ] 6	

30. How long does it take you to get to work and back home each day? (Please make sure that you give your total daily travelling time).

Less than half an hour	[ ] 1	
Half to one hour	[ ] 2	
Between one and two hours	[ ] 3	[ ] 63
Between two and three hours	[ ] 4	
More than three hours	[ ] 5	

31. If you could choose any kind of job at all what job would you most like to have?

_____ [ ][ ] 64 65

_____

_____

_____ [ ] 66

32. What could you do to improve your chances of getting this job?

_____ [ ][ ] 67 68

_____

_____ [ ] 69

_____

This completes your questionnaire. Thank you for your help.

Please do not write in this column.

If you are unemployed at present, please answer all the questions on the green pages.

33. How long have you been unemployed?

Under 2 weeks	[ ] 1	
2 weeks and under 4 weeks	[ ] 2	
4 weeks and under 8 weeks	[ ] 3	
8 weeks and under 13 weeks	[ ] 4	[ ] 70
13 weeks and under 26 weeks	[ ] 5	
26 weeks and over	[ ] 6	

34. Are you looking for a job right now?

Yes [ ] 1 No [ ] 2 [ ] 71

If yes, what sort of job are you looking for?

_____ [ ][ ] 72 73

35. When did you last apply for a job?

Within the last 2 weeks	[ ] 1	
2 weeks to 4 weeks ago	[ ] 2	
4 weeks to 8 weeks ago	[ ] 3	
8 weeks to 13 weeks ago	[ ] 4	[ ] 74
More than 13 weeks ago	[ ] 5	

Please do not write in this column.

36. How often do you do each of the following: (put a tick in one box on each line)

	Never	Occasionally	Once a week	Daily	
Go to the Commonwealth Employment Service	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 75
Go to centres for unemployed people	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 76
Work at home around house or garden etc.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 77
Work voluntarily in the community (e.g. looking after children, helping pensioners etc.)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 78
Do odd jobs for money (e.g. baby sitting, gardening, house cleaning)	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 79
Hang around with friends	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 80
Go looking for jobs	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 81
Watch T.V.	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 82
Attend courses or programs designed to improve your chances of getting a job	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ] 83

37. How does your family feel about your situation? Pick out one of the following which most closely describes their attitude towards you.

Supportive/sympathetic	[ ] 1	
Tolerant	[ ] 2	
Critical	[ ] 3	
Anxious over money	[ ] 4	[ ] 84
Angry	[ ] 5	
Don't care	[ ] 6	

Please do not write in this column.

38. Are you receiving unemployment benefits?

Yes	[ ] 1	
No, but have applied for benefits	[ ] 2	
No and have not applied for benefits.	[ ] 3	[ ] 85

39. How long do you think you might be unemployed?

For a few months	[ ] 1	
For much of the year	[ ] 2	[ ] 86
Indefinitely	[ ] 3	

40. How much does being unemployed worry you?

It worries me a lot	[ ] 1	
It doesn't matter much	[ ] 2	[ ] 87
It doesn't worry me at all	[ ] 3	

41. What could you do to improve your chances of getting a job?

[ ][ ] 88 89
[ ] 90

42. What should the government do to help unemployed young people while there are not enough jobs available?

[ ][ ] 91 92
[ ] 93

This completes yourquestionnaire. Thank you for your help.